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(20142)	Date	Copy No.
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<b>RESPECTING</b>		
<b>SYRIA</b>		
<b>PART 9</b>		
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FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING  
SYRIA—PART 9

GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

VY 1011/1

No. 1

SYRIA: ANNUAL REVIEW FOR 1954

*Sir John Gardener to Sir Anthony Eden. (Received February 14)*

(No. 19. Confidential) *Damascus,*  
Sir, *February 4, 1955.*

With reference to Lord Salisbury's circular despatch No. 078 of September 9, 1953, I have the honour to submit the following review of political events in Syria for the year 1954, together with an Annex giving a chronological summary of the year's principal events.

2. The outstanding political event in Syria during 1954 was the abrupt collapse in February of the military dictatorship of General Shishakli and the return of the country to democratic life with its attendant political instability. Shishakli's attempt in the latter part of 1953 to liberalise his régime, although prompted by praiseworthy motives, proved to be a short-lived experiment. The opposition had been given an opportunity to show its hand and, in spite of the apparent loyalty of the army, Shishakli did not feel that he could safely allow the general expression of discontent to go uncurbed. The students were restive, discreet criticism of the régime appeared in the press, and stories of police brutality and activity among the old political leaders were rife. At the end of January, Shishakli suddenly arrested the main political leaders on charges of planning a general insurrection and of illegal political activities. At the same time serious troubles broke out in the Jebel Druze, which were ruthlessly suppressed. From then onward, the régime's hold on the population became more precarious. Civilian discontent had its effect on the army where some of the senior officers had family ties with the arrested politicians. The army, too, had its own grievances—arbitrary dismissals and transfers, disgust with Shishakli's brutal treatment of his opponents and a growing distrust of a dictator who refused to delegate authority and whose megalomaniac insistence on dealing personally with matters which might be left to his subordinates clogged the administrative machine.

3. Nevertheless, the end came unexpectedly. The army units in Northern Syria revolted at the end of February and issued an ultimatum to Shishakli. After some hesitation, they were joined by those in the south. Shishakli, although still supported by armoured units in the Damascus area, was unwilling to fight it out. His departure on February 25 to Beirut and thence to Saudi Arabia and France probably saved the country from civil war.

4. During the three days which followed, the fate of Syria remained in the balance. An attempt, backed by the armoured units, to prolong the military régime failed and serious riots, organised by the Communists and other Left-wing elements, occurred in Damascus. Meanwhile, negotiations were being conducted at Homs between the Chief of Staff and the leaders of the political parties. Agreement was reached on reverting to the Constitution of 1950, the Shishakli Parliament was dissolved and the aged President of the Republic, Hashem Atassi, made a ceremonial entry into Damascus on March 1 to resume the functions from which he had been ousted by Shishakli in December 1951.

5. The stage was now set for a return to the pre-Shishakli system; a Right-wing coalition Government of Nationalists and Populists was formed under Sabri Assali and new elections were promised as soon as the register of voters could be revised. Meanwhile, efforts were made to eradicate as far as possible the traces of the Shishakli régime. Some army officers and officials were dismissed, while others who had been removed by Shishakli were reinstated; the Arab Liberation Movement (the party which Shishakli had created prior to the 1953 elections) ceased its activities, and a revision of all legislation enacted during the previous régime was put in hand. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm for this purge soon waned. By the end of the year, the legality of the Arab Liberation Movement had been

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upheld by the courts and pro-Shishakli officers, who had escaped the purge, were being posted to influential positions in the army.

6. While Parliament busied itself with a new electoral law, Syrian political life once again began to show signs of the chronic instability which had been one of the causes of the series of military *coups d'Etat*. Personal animosities between the leading politicians led to a deadlock which not even the return from five years' exile in Egypt of Shukri Quwatli, the Nationalist leader and former President of the Republic, could break. By June, the strains within the coalition, increased by vigorous Left-wing opposition and bazaar rumours of a further *coup d'Etat*, had become so great that the Government was forced to resign. It was succeeded by a non-party Government under Said Ghazzi. The new Government's mandate was limited to supervising the elections and preparations went rapidly ahead. A last-moment hitch occurred when early in August the Populists announced their intention of boycotting the elections on the grounds of interference by certain army officers. Their fears were, however, allayed and the elections, which had been postponed from August 21 to September 24, took place in an atmosphere of calm.

7. The consensus of Syrian public opinion was that the elections had been conducted fairly. But the great mass of the voters is unskilled and uninterested in the art of democratic politics and the Right-wing candidates had failed to nurse their constituencies. In consequence, the Left-wing Parties, whose members are more politically alert than the others, scored successes rather disproportionate to their strength. Nevertheless the new Chamber seems to reflect, more or less reliably, the broad trends of political allegiance in the country. The result was necessarily fragmentary with no one party commanding an absolute majority. A Coalition Government thus became inevitable, and the balance of power rested with a heterogeneous group of Independents, some with Right-wing and others with Left-wing sympathies. The negotiations which followed were necessarily lengthy, and it was not until the end of October, after Khalid Al-Azm, leader of one of the Independent groups and alleged to be a French *protégé*, had failed to form a Cabinet, that a Right-wing Coalition Government of Nationalists, Populists and Independents was formed under Farès

El-Khoury, an octogenarian statesman with no marked political flair.

8. The fact that the two provisional Governments, which had held office since the fall of Shishakli, had reserved all important decisions of policy until the new Government was formed after the elections left Farès El-Khoury's Cabinet with the task of charting the future course of Syria both in domestic and foreign affairs. Its inability to take firm and courageous decisions has been due not only to its unreliable parliamentary majority but also to the inherent unwillingness of the local politicians to risk their popularity by espousing an unpopular cause.

9. The emergence of a strong, well-organised Left-wing movement in Syria has probably been the most important development of the year. During the Shishakli régime, the Left, which represented the most vocal and effective opposition to the military dictatorship, was firmly repressed. The Communist Party was virtually proscribed and the Left-wing Ba'ath Socialist Party, although taking full advantage of the latitude allowed to the Opposition by Shishakli during the latter part of 1953, had to tread warily. The change of régime brought the Left wing fully into the open. The riots which occurred immediately after Shishakli's departure, and for which they were partly responsible, were the beginning of an active campaign. Student demonstrations became more frequent. More was heard of labour troubles, and a number of strikes for higher wages and better conditions occurred during the summer, the most serious of which was a strike of textile workers which lasted from June to August. A purposeful election campaign gave the Left wing a larger representation in the Chamber than ever before. Out of a total of 142 seats, the Ba'ath-Socialists gained sixteen and the Communists one. To this must be added the group of Independents headed by Khalid Al-Azm consisting of about thirty Deputies who, although Conservatives by temperament and background, have so far co-operated with the Communists and Ba'ath Socialist Party in the Opposition. This has been due more to their personal dislike for the Nationalist and Populist leaders than to any real sympathy with Left-wing objectives.

10. Apart from the close co-operation in Parliament between the Ba'ath Socialists and the Communists who profess roughly the same policy in internal and foreign affairs, the past year has produced no

conclusive evidence that the former are a fellow-travelling group. Nevertheless, there is undoubtedly some Communist penetration, and the alliance of the two parties in the Opposition has certainly strengthened the Communists' position here. Syria, throughout 1954, was in fact a special target for Soviet propaganda and Communist activity. The banning of the Communist Party in some neighbouring Arab countries seems to have made Syria the pivot point of the cold war in this area. The staff of the Soviet Legation in Damascus increased considerably during the year, and some satellite missions were opened. The Soviet Union also participated on a large scale at the Damascus International Fair held in September and, in the absence of British and American official pavilions, created a considerable effect. The Syrian Communist Party, taking full advantage of the freer political atmosphere following the fall of Shishakli, has made notable progress. Its main achievement was the election as Deputy for Damascus of Khalid Bikdash, the party leader, who came third in the poll. This has given the Communists a respectable platform for further propaganda which is being intensified by the sale of Communist literature in bookshops throughout Syria and by the free distribution of Communist papers to the trade unions where the Communists have already established a foothold.

11. An analysis of the results of the general election shows that the Communists, who took part as so-called National Front candidates, drew their support mainly from the large towns. Social conditions no doubt played their part in winning votes for the party, but other factors, such as the appeal of communism to the frustrated younger generation of intellectuals and the search for some form of protest against the Western attitude towards the Palestine question, also played their part. The increase in communism in Syria during 1954, taken in conjunction with the general trend to the Left and the Government's reluctance to take any really effective measures against it, is an unfortunate development. It is not, however, a serious menace as yet and, given firm government and a more sympathetic policy on the part of the tripartite Powers towards the Arab world, it should prove possible to arrest its progress.

12. The strength of the Left wing has also been enhanced since the fall of Shishakli by the existence within the army of a small

but powerful group of officers who support the Ba'ath Socialist Party. This is one of several political factions within the army which has lost much of its homogeneity since the change of régime. During the latter part of 1954, political intrigue was rife among the senior officers, and this has necessarily affected the *esprit de corps* of the army and its efficiency as a fighting weapon. Although the army withdrew from active interference in politics with the change of régime, it remains a decisive factor in Syrian political life. It might well have intervened again in 1954 but for the absence of a leader of the calibre of Shishakli and its lack of agreement over political objectives.

13. The past year has produced no significant change in Syrian foreign policy. The Shishakli régime left a legacy of xenophobia and rigid neutralism and public opinion remained affected by the anti-"colonial" propaganda which, after the departure of Shishakli, became the war-cry of the Left. The absence of any marked evolution in Syrian foreign policy from March onwards has been disappointing, since the Right-wing politicians, who have been in power throughout this period, are, in general, well-disposed towards the West. Unfortunately, they lack the courage of their convictions and are all too prone to succumb to Left-wing pressure and to clamour from the streets. This was shown clearly during the debate which preceded the vote of confidence in Farès El-Khoury's Government in early November. The Prime Minister, who, after eight months of provisional government, might have been expected to take a reasonably bold and constructive line, felt obliged to make a gesture to the Opposition and announced a foreign policy of neutrality and opposition to alliances with non-Arab countries which did not differ basically from the Shishakli attitude.

14. Nevertheless, developments in the Arab world have had their effect on Syria. The conclusion of the Anglo-Egyptian and Anglo-Persian Agreements, the steps taken to settle the Buraimi dispute and the prospect of a defence alliance between Iraq and the West have provoked second thoughts in Syrian foreign policy. Throughout December, this became the main topic of discussion in the press and the parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee (on which the Left-wing groups are strongly represented) held a number of meetings to review the position. At the end of the



year, there were reports that the committee had confirmed the neutralist policy of the present Government, although it seemed likely that the matter would in due course come before the Chamber as a whole.

15. In spite of this, there is undoubtedly a current of opinion in Syria in favour of defence co-operation with the West. This is prompted by the fear that Syria will become isolated from the other Arab States and that she will not get her share of military and economic aid. Faced with this dilemma and paralysed by fear of the Left, the Government has taken refuge in a policy of full support for the Arab League and of shifting the onus of responsibility in all matters of foreign affairs to the collective wisdom of the league. Nevertheless, Syrian relations with neighbouring Arab States during 1954 were uneasy. The change of régime here in February caused Syrians to regard less sympathetically the military dictatorship in Egypt, although the Syrian Government tended throughout the year to follow the Egyptian lead in the Arab League. Relations with Egypt deteriorated sharply during the summer. The official welcome accorded to the Abu Fath brothers after their paper had been suppressed by the Egyptian Government and the flight of many leading Moslem Brothers to Syria after the Brotherhood had been proscribed in Egypt caused bad feeling between the two countries. This was increased by the violent attacks against Egypt in the Syrian press and the anti-Egyptian demonstrations which took place throughout Syria in December as a protest against the trial and execution of members of the Brotherhood following the attempted assassination of Colonel Nasser.

16. Relations with Iraq and Jordan were affected as usual by the Syrian belief that these countries were too much under Western influence. The fall of Shishakli, who had suspected the Iraqi Government of harbouring a Free Syrian Movement under Colonel Safa, and of provoking (with British help) the troubles in the Jebel Druze in January, led to some improvement in Syrian-Iraqi relations. On the other hand, the question of Syrian-Iraqi union, once a burning issue in Syrian politics, remained in the background and, apart from occasional articles in the press, provoked little public interest.

17. Lebanese attacks on Shishakli in January and February culminated in the Syrian decision to close the frontier. Relations quickly improved with the change

of the régime, but the latent antagonism between the two countries came to the fore again in November when negotiations on an agreement leading to economic union between the two countries were resumed without much prospect of success.

18. Relations with the West were dominated by the Palestine question. The Soviet veto of the Security Council's resolution on the Jordan Waters diversion scheme in January enabled Russia to ingratiate herself with Syria at the expense of the Western Powers. Britain and the United States were under constant attack in the press for what appeared to Syrians as a pro-Israeli policy. The presentation of credentials by our two ambassadors in Jerusalem in November lent colour to that belief and provoked a particularly bitter outburst. Nevertheless, for the greater part of the year, there was no marked increase in tension between Syria and Israel. There were the usual crop of incidents in the frontier area and on Lake Tiberias, none of them serious. In December, however, the situation deteriorated with the arrest on Syrian territory of five Israeli soldiers and the forcing down at Lydda of a Syrian civil aircraft on a routine flight between Damascus and Cairo. While 1954 brought no significant change in Syrian-Israeli relations, it is encouraging that the realism which occasionally characterises the Syrian approach to the Palestine question led Syrian experts to co-operate fully with their colleagues from the other Arab countries concerned in drawing up counter-proposals based on the T.V.A. plan for the unified development of the Jordan Valley for discussion with Mr. Johnston, President Eisenhower's special representative, during the summer.

19. Anglo-Syrian relations during the past year have been helped by the return to power in February of Right-wing politicians who are not only pro-Western in outlook but remember the part we played in giving Syria her independence. Unfortunately, the strength of Left-wing pressure, which has led the Government to adopt a neutralist policy, has prevented this sentiment from having full play. Nevertheless, within the limits thus imposed, the Syrian Government have been consistently helpful as, for example, over the Cyprus question.

20. The Syrian attitude towards France during 1954 has undergone a change. French influence within the Syrian army ensured that France was not unduly embarrassed during the Shishakli régime. The

fall of Shishakli left the French open to attack and the press was not slow to initiate and sustain a campaign against French policy in North Africa. Moreover, as a result of the success at the general election in September of Khalid Al-Azm, a noted Francophile who was generally believed to be in the pay of the French, there have been strong Right-wing criticisms of alleged French interference in Syrian internal affairs.

21. From the economic standpoint, 1954 has been a prosperous year for Syria. The barley and cotton crops were some of the best on record, and the general level of agricultural and industrial production was satisfactory. Continued progress was made on the development plans already in hand—particularly the development of the port of Latakia and the Ghab Valley project—and Syrian interest in further plans of this sort led to the visit of a mission from the International Bank from February to April to carry out a comprehensive survey of the resources of Syria and to make recommendations for future development.

22. Against this background of steady economic progress, an International Trade Fair was held in Damascus in September. This was the first event of its kind to take place in an Arab country in recent years and was an unqualified success. The participation of twenty-four countries in the fair greatly enhanced Syrian prestige and national pride was duly flattered. Britain, as a notable absentee, was widely criticised for her failure to participate. Fortunately, the large number of British goods displayed by Syrian agents provided ample evidence of the healthy state of Anglo-Syrian trade.

23. It is difficult to conclude this review of Syrian affairs during 1954 in an optimistic vein. Although the country is economically sound and has a hard-working population and ample water supply as the essential prerequisites to greater prosperity, it suffers from serious political instability and lack of effective leadership. During the past year, it has exchanged a ruthless, but efficient and single-minded, dictatorship for the hazards of personal and party politics. The suppression of normal political life for over three years has failed to produce on the part of the politicians either a sense of statesmanship or even a willingness to work together successfully for the common good. After the first flush of victory personal animosities and petty intrigue have again become the characteristics of Syrian political life. At the same time, the upsurge of a strong and

well-disciplined Left-wing movement, linked to the Communists and with some army support, represents a new, if long-term, threat to Syria. For the moment, the pressure exerted by the Left is deterring the Government from facing courageously the problems of the Arab world and forcing it back into the shell of neutralism as the line of least resistance. In 1954 Syria entered her tenth year of existence as a fully independent State; she has undoubtedly achieved much during that period. But the future of this country, which occupies an important strategic position in the Middle East, will remain an uncertain factor until the political instability of the past year has given place to strong and stable government.

24. I am sending a copy of this despatch to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

J. GARDENER.

#### Annex

#### CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS OF 1954

##### January

- 1 New press law came into operation.
- 13 Syrian University closed for fear of disturbances.
- 20 Conference at Riyadh on Hejaz Railway at which it was decided in principle to reopen the railway.
- 22 Russia vetoed Three-Power resolution on Jordan Waters.
- 26-27 Main Opposition leaders arrested.
- 27 Lawyers' strike. Martial law declared in most of Syria.
- 28 Fighting between tribesmen and Government forces in the Jebel Druze.
- 30 Anglo-Syrian Civil Air Services Agreement signed.

##### February

- 24 President Shishakli obliquely referred to Iraqi-British interference in Syria.
- 5 Iraqi military attaché asked by Syrian Government to leave Syria. Internal situation officially declared to have returned to normal.
- 7 International Bank Delegation arrived to begin study of Syrian economy.
- 18 The Prime Minister of the Lebanon came to Damascus to offer Lebanese mediation between Iraq and Syria.
- 24 Army units in Aleppo declared themselves in revolt against President Shishakli.
- 25 Revolt spread to all northern army units. Southern units refused to march against north. President Shishakli resigned and fled to Beirut.
- 26 Politicians released from prison. Armoured units near Damascus declared in favour of continuance of military régime and supported Kuzbari as Acting President of the Republic.



## February

- 27 Extreme political uncertainty. Kuzbari resigned. Chief of Staff went to Homs to confer with Hashim Atassi and northern army leaders. Serious riots in Damascus. Curfew imposed.
- 28 Chief of Staff returned to Damascus and announced Hashim Atassi would resume Presidency from which he had been ousted by General Shishakli. Serious riots in Damascus organised by Communists.

## March

- 1 President Atassi came to Damascus and composition of Government under Sabri Assali announced. 1950 Constitution declared to be still in force and that of 1953 said to be illegal.
- 6 Statement by Minister of Foreign Affairs that Syria would respect her international obligations.
- 9 Her Majesty's Government recognised new Syrian Government.
- 15 1950 Parliament held first meeting since 1951.
- 19 Moslem Brotherhood held meeting in Damascus with representatives from most Arab countries present.
- 21 Ratification of postal agreement with United Kingdom.
- 22 Boycott on I.C.I. lifted on certain conditions.

## April

- 10 Delegation of seventy-five Syrian politicians visited ex-President Quwatli in Alexandria but he decided not to return to Syria at that time.
- 25 International Bank delegation left Syria.

## May

- 1 Demonstrations by workers among whom there was a conspicuous Communist influence.
- 2 Parliament passed a Bill by which those who had received Government money during General Shishakli's régime were to be compelled to refund it unless cleared of this obligation by special boards.
- 9 Inter-Arab Economic Agreement ratified by Syria.
- 10 Parliament passed new press law.

## June

- 10 Resignation of Sabri Assali's Government.
- 18 Colonel Safa arrested on charge of plotting to establish illegal Government.
- 19 Announcement of formation of a Government of non-political personalities under Said Ghazzi.
- 25 Beginning of strike of textile workers.
- 28 New electoral law promulgated.
- 30 New law promulgated attaching the Gendarmerie to the Ministry of the Interior instead of to the army.

## July

- 8 Hasan Hodeibi, Supreme Guide of the Moslem Brotherhood in Egypt, arrived in Damascus for a five-week visit to Syria.
- 20 Syria complained to the Security Council against a resumption of work by Israel in the region of Jisr Banat Yakub.

## July

- 23 Inter-Arab Economic Agreement came into force.
- 28 Passage of an amendment to the labour law which gave the Government the right to declare a strike legal and to order the opening of factories and a return to work. Decrees issued fixing August 20 as date of elections and settling number of deputies at 139, subsequently increased to 142.
- 30 Magistrates began strike for higher salaries.

## August

- 4 Populist Party issued statement explaining their decision to boycott the elections by accusing certain army officers of partisan interference in politics. Moslem Brotherhood also announced that they would not officially take part in the elections.
- 5 Decree postponing elections to September 24. Publication of Ministerial decision stating that the textile workers' strike, begun in June, was legal and ordering the reopening of factories and the resumption of work.
- 7 Return of ex-President Quwatli from his five-year exile in Egypt.
- 16 Greek Orthodox Patriarch and suite left for a visit to Russia and other Iron Curtain countries.
- 22 Magistrates end strike.
- 23 Quwatli appealed for national unity and an end to social unrest.

## September

- 2 Damascus International Fair opened.
- 2-6 Nominations for Parliamentary elections.
- 24-25 First ballot in general elections.

## October

- 1 Damascus International Fair closed.
- 4 Second ballot in general elections.
- 10-18 Cotton Festival held at Aleppo.
- 14 Said Ghazzi's Government resigned but continued in acting capacity.
- 29 Farès el Khoury formed new Right-wing coalition Government.

## November

- 3 Farès el Khoury's Government won vote of confidence.
- 13 Egyptian Ambassador at Damascus, General Ali Neguib, withdrawn.
- 17-20 Visit to Damascus by Mr. Shuckburgh, Assistant Under-Secretary of State in the Foreign Office.
- 17 Resumption of Lebanese-Syrian economic negotiations. Imposition of ban on the export of wheat and flour.

## December

- 1-4 Her Majesty's Ambassadors' Conference at Beirut.
- 4-10 Demonstrations against Egyptian Government as a consequence of the condemnation and execution of the Moslem Brothers at Cairo.
- 14-17 United States Ambassadors' Conference at Damascus.
- 29 Government decided that nationals of Arab League States need not obtain entry visas for Syria.

VY 1015/14

No. 2

## POLITICAL POSITION AND POLICY OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT IN SYRIA

Sir John Gardener to Sir Anthony Edèn. (Received February 21)

(No. 21. Confidential)  
Sir,Damascus,  
February 17, 1955.

As you will already be aware from my telegram No. 57 of the 14th of February, the Nationalist leader, Sabri Assali, succeeded in forming a coalition Government composed of four members of the Democratic bloc, three Nationalists including himself, one Independent and one member of the Ba'ath-Socialist Party. The history of the formation of this Government is worth a brief investigation. In addition I have the honour in this despatch to offer some comments on the Government's political position and its probable policy.

2. The fall of one government and the formation of another is a relatively common occurrence in Syria and can usually be explained in terms of personal rivalry and ambition. The recent change is no exception to this, but what gives it a peculiar interest is the connection, which is becoming increasingly apparent, between these personal rivalries and the question of where Syria stands in relation to the West. Though the opposition led by Khalid al Azm, the chief of the Democratic bloc, and by Akram Hourani, the leader of the Ba'ath-Socialists, made the last Government's relatively pro-Iraqi foreign policy their chief point of attack, it was not on this question that Faris el Khoury's Government fell. Indeed, his Government was not defeated: it disintegrated as a result of personal quarrels upon such purely internal matters as a family vendetta at Aleppo.

3. The driving force behind the formation of the new Government has largely been the personal ambition of two men, Sabri Assali, the new Prime Minister, and Khalid al Azm, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs. Both, it is commonly believed, can expect financial rewards from foreign Powers. Sabri Assali is thought to have a close connection with Saudi Arabia, while Khalid al Azm, a noted Francophile, is believed to be in French pay. In addition, Sabri Assali wished to be Prime Minister again, and to influence the by-elections for 18 seats, which will take place in the next two months. He has chosen to be his own Minister of the Interior. Khalid al Azm is also interested in the by-elections since many of them have come about as the result of the invalidation of the election of several of his supporters. Besides, Khalid al Azm is shaping his whole policy in relation to the presidential election in August. It is probable that he only consented to serve under Assali in the belief that the Cabinet would fall before August and that the Prime Minister would then be discredited. At the same time it seems likely that he calculated that he could not afford further to postpone rewarding his heterogeneous group of followers with the spoils of office.

4. The price of office may be greater than either Sabri Assali or Khalid al Azm bargained for. Assali has already split the Nationalist Party of which he is the leader. This seems partly due to his blatant disregard of the policy drawn up by the central committee of the party, and partly to the fact that some members of this staunch Right-wing party cannot stomach Assali's open alliance with the Ba'ath-Socialists. For his part, Khalid al Azm has had to accept the risk that he may be discredited with the rest of the Government when it falls. He has also had to join a Government which he does not lead in name and may not be able to lead in fact. If this should prove to be the case it might be seriously damaging to his reputation as an energetic reformer.

5. Indeed at this moment there are many who say that the new Government will not survive its first meeting with the Chamber on the 19th of February. It is probable that it will not have a large majority, but the calculations I myself have made to-day suggest that, if conditions do not change, it will in fact get its vote of confidence. Nevertheless, even if the Government gains its majority it will be dependent at first at any rate upon the 18 votes of the Ba'ath-Socialists. The results of the by-elections, which will no doubt be manipulated, will presumably strengthen the Government's position considerably. Meanwhile the Ba'ath-Socialists have



very nearly achieved the position of holding the balance, which has been their aim. Ideally they probably wished to avoid all responsibility for the Government. It is noticeable that the single Ba'ath-Socialist Minister is not one of the party leaders, and that his office, Minister of State, carries no departmental responsibilities with it. He has also had the position of Acting Minister of Health thrust upon him, but it seems clear that the Government intend to use this Ministry and perhaps one other as bribes to attract wavering votes. The Ba'ath-Socialists are therefore in the happy position of not having to accept full responsibility for the Government's internal policy, which in view of the heterogeneous nature of the coalition is likely to be hesitant, while at the same time being able to insist that the Government's foreign policy should be firmly set against any agreements with the West.

6. It was this aspect of the situation which caused the President of the Republic, whose sympathies are with the Populists, to postpone as long as he could, calling upon Sabri Assali to form a Government. His hand was eventually forced, no alternative being then in sight, by the reiterated demands of Assali and his friends. It is clear that the President is in favour of a cautiously pro-Western policy. The fact that he eventually had to call upon Assali, when faced with a near ultimatum, does not seem to have weakened his position or that of the policy which he advocates. Indeed, his hesitancy in calling upon Assali has been openly confirmed by the general doubt as to whether Assali will in fact get a vote of confidence.

7. For a party which has just fallen from office the Populists are confident and reasonably contented. In the last few days it has seemed to them that they have the strength if not to overthrow the Government immediately at least to put it in constant danger. It is particularly important to us that the Populists, who at the moment are the obvious nucleus of an alternative Government, should feel, as they do, that they were not overthrown as a result of their relatively pro-Western policy. They calculate, and they may well be right, that it is no bad thing for the anti-Western group to be in power at the time when the Turkish-Iraqi pact is signed, provided, as seems likely, that the Populists return to office not long afterwards.

8. The part played by the Army in the fall of Faris el Khoury's Government is not clear, but it was probably not a large one. There is, however, no doubt that the pro-French Chief of Staff worked actively, by threat of a *coup d'état*, to bring about Sabri Assali's Government; and some people say that he had also threatened a *coup d'état* if the life of the new Government is cut short. The composition of the new Cabinet is so heterogeneous that there is something in it to please most of the Army factions. Principally, of course, the pro-French faction must be pleased to see Khalid al Azm as Minister for Foreign Affairs and Acting Minister of Defence. Also the Left-wing group led by Colonel Adnan Malki must be satisfied with the position the Ba'ath-Socialists have achieved.

9. Prediction is difficult in the constantly changing circumstances of Syrian politics, but on the supposition that the Government obtains a vote of confidence by a small majority I would expect the situation to be as follows. The Government, conscious of their weakness, will do everything they can to secure favourable results in the by-elections now pending. If they are successful their position will be considerably strengthened and they may become less dependent upon the more extreme Left-wing support. But whatever the result of the by-elections the present Government will be less well inclined towards the West than its predecessor. It will gravitate towards the Egyptian rather than the Iraqi orbit, not necessarily out of respect for Egypt but because of Saudi gold, its own parliamentary position, and out of a desire to draw strength from the strongly prevalent feeling in Syria that nothing should be done to disrupt Arab unity.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jedda, Tel Aviv, Paris, Washington, Tehran, Tripoli, Benghazi, the United Kingdom Delegation at New York and the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

J. GARDENER.

VY 1015/31

No. 3

### THE ASSASSINATION OF COLONEL MALKI

Sir John Gardener to Mr. Macmillan. (Received May 2)

(No. 61. Confidential)

Damascus,

Sir,

April 27, 1955.

With reference to my telegrams Nos. 195 and 196, I have the honour to report that Colonel Adnan Malki, Head of the Third Bureau and Assistant Chief of Staff, was assassinated in Damascus on the 22nd of April.

2. On the afternoon of that day, a number of senior army officers were among the spectators at a football match between Syrian and Egyptian army teams. Eye-witnesses say that about 20 minutes after the beginning of the game, they heard two shots and saw a sergeant of Military Police standing behind Colonel Malki holding a pistol. Colonel Malki had been hit by both bullets, and died soon afterwards. It is not clear whether the murderer tried to escape, but he used the pistol to commit suicide as he was about to be arrested.

3. It appears that the military authorities investigating the murder soon established that the Military Police sergeant, whose name was Abdurrahim Yunis and who was an Alawite from Safita, was a member of the Parti Populaire Syrien. On the assumption that that party was the instigator of the crime many leading figures of this party have subsequently been arrested throughout Syria, although George Abdul Masih, the leader, has not yet been found and is believed to have fled the country. The party's headquarters in Damascus and provincial towns have been searched by the police, and documents proving that the party instigated the murder are officially stated to have been found. Twenty-five army officers who are believed to be supporters of the Parti Populaire Syrien have been arrested, and the total number of persons held for investigations is reported to be over a hundred. There is agitation in the Press for the removal of the parliamentary immunity of the only Deputy representing the Parti Populaire Syrien in the Chamber. The newspaper *Al Bina*, the organ of the party, has ceased to appear because its printing works in Damascus were burned down on the night of the 22nd of April. The party may have decided that a fire was the safest way to destroy compromising documents, or the military may have caused the fire as an act of revenge. At all events the disappearance of *Al Bina* means that there is one less newspaper following a consistently anti-Communist line.

4. The motive for the crime is, of course, difficult to establish with certainty as the murderer is dead, but the fact that the victim was Colonel Malki makes it more probable that the motive was political. Colonel Malki was a pleasant man with a good personality; he had a good record in the Palestine campaign, and was a young man (38) to hold the position of Head of the Third Bureau. His political sympathies were with the Left-wing Baath Socialist Party, and he was the leader of the faction in the army which favours the conclusion of the proposed Saudi-Syrian-Egyptian pact. As such, he was bitterly opposed to the Parti Populaire Syrien which, as advocates of the Fertile Crescent, favour the Iraqi connection.

5. Certain other facts are taken as linking the crime with the Parti Populaire Syrien. It appears that a certain Colonel Ghassan al Jadid was one of three colonels who were recently dismissed from the army. Colonel Jadid is said to have engaged in political activities on behalf of the P.P.S., and to have been dismissed for this reason. He came from the same small town in the Alawite district as the murderer, whose brother stood unsuccessfully as P.P.S. candidate for that constituency in the 1954 elections. Colonel Jadid is believed to have left Damascus four hours before the murder, accompanied by George Abdul Masih, the leader of the P.P.S., and the search for the two men is in progress.

6. The chairman of the Supreme Council of the P.P.S. has made a statement in Lebanon denying that the party had any responsibility for the crime, and alleging that Communists were using the incident as an excuse to attack the P.P.S. In fact not only the Communists but also the Baath (Socialist) Party are attacking the P.P.S., and there are demands that the party be suppressed because its principles are said to be inconsistent with those of the Syrian Constitution.



7. A debate on the assassination took place in Parliament on the 26th of April. The Prime Minister said that Colonel Malki had lost his life not in some petty feud but for the national aspirations of Syria. The assassin killed himself so that the reasons for the crime should remain secret. The Attorney-General's investigation showed that the assassination was part of a conspiracy to overthrow the Constitution, seize power and change the country's policy. The people concerned had thrown themselves into the arms of a foreign Power and asked for her assistance in order to effect a *coup d'état*. The matter was therefore serious and the Government were pursuing their investigation and enlarging its scope. After giving details of the arrests made, Sabri Assali promised a full statement in two days' time. After a number of speakers had denounced the crime, linking it with "colonisation," Parliament agreed to waive the parliamentary immunity of the one P.P.S. deputy who was subsequently arrested.

8. The murder of Colonel Malki is yet another symptom of the unrest in Syria which I described in my letter (10104/36/55) of the 22nd of April to Mr. Rose. The feeling of tension and expectancy has been heightened. The army, meanwhile, are taking advantage of the widespread anger at the assassination of Malki and the general fear of more active military intervention in internal affairs to create a favourable atmosphere for the conclusion of the proposed pact with Egypt and Saudi Arabia. They are spreading the story that the "colonising" Powers are behind the assassination and they are being helped by the Communists who are naming the Americans and ourselves as the guilty parties. In order further to reduce opposition to the agreement, the military are arresting people known for their pro-Iraqi sympathies, as well as members of the P.P.S. It is a natural Syrian tendency to blame the foreigner for any untoward internal event; and, in this case, the circumstances are favourable for furthering the army's interests. Colonel Malki, with his known Left-wing sympathies, is put forward as the symbol of those who favour freedom from foreign (*i.e.*, non-Arab) alliances and alignment with Egypt. The P.P.S. is branded as the agent of the "colonists" who are trying to drag a reluctant Syria into the Turco-Iraqi Pact.

9. It therefore seems that the death of Colonel Malki, exploited by army and Left-wing propaganda, may possibly precipitate the conclusion of the tripartite pact, perhaps at the cost of dropping some or all of the Syrian counter-proposals and signing a pact on the lines originally envisaged. This is clearly the aim of the army and, in the short term, its position has been so strengthened by Colonel Malki's death that it can probably impose its own terms on the Government. The longer term results are more difficult to assess. The assassination may have come as a salutary warning to the army of the possible consequences of too active an intervention in politics, particularly as documents are alleged to have been found giving a list of the intended victims of the P.P.S., including the Chief of Staff and his immediate associates, as well as Malki. Moreover, Malki was the leader of the Baath-Socialist element in the army. With his energy, powers of organisation and ability, as Head of the Third Bureau, to post his friends to key positions and to remove officers who were his political enemies, he had brought the Chief of Staff under his influence. General Shukair was, in fact, little more than Malki's spokesman. The immediate results of Malki's death are due to some extent to the continuing impetus of his personality and the fact that his assassination can be used to further the army's immediate aim of concluding the tripartite pact as soon as possible. But the fact remains that the most politically active section of the army has lost its leader and, looking further ahead, this may affect political alignments within the army, the attitude of the Chief of Staff and the ability of the military to impose its views on the civil Government.

10. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Amman, Ankara, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jeddah, Paris and Washington; and to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

JOHN GARDENER.

VY 1051/12

No. 4

CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY OF STATE AND THE SYRIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ON JULY 7, 1955

*Mr. Macmillan to Mr. Gallagher (Damascus)*

(No. 80. Confidential)  
Sir,

Foreign Office,  
July 7, 1955.

The Syrian Foreign Minister, accompanied by M. Daoudy, the Syrian Chargé d'Affaires, called on me this afternoon. He had previously been entertained to luncheon by the Minister of State.

2. After the usual courtesies, I raised the question of the Egyptian/Syrian/Saudi Pact with him and urged him to think very deeply before committing himself to such a proposition, which really did little to build up strength in the Middle East and which had originally come into being as a gesture against Iraq. I pointed out that it was quite untrue that we had brought pressure to bear on Syria to join the Turco-Iraqi Pact, but that we certainly deprecated any action taken to promote the Egyptian/Syrian Pact.

3. M. Khalid al Azm replied that the Pact was in no way directed against Iraq. Although he himself did not see eye to eye with the Iraqi Government, Iraq was a country as dear to him as his own. We for our part felt that the threat to the Middle East came from Russia. The Arabs did not feel this—the threat for them was from Israel. Syria felt that she was not sufficiently protected against Israel and that was the only reason why she would like the Egyptian/Syrian/Saudi Pact to come about. There was no reason why Iraq should not join it herself later on when her relations with Egypt had improved. The Arab League Pact was deficient in many ways and something new along the lines of the Egyptian/Syrian/Saudi Pact was necessary. I replied that, however this might be, the signature of the Pact would be construed in the Middle East as an action against Iraq. It was interesting to note that the Communists in the Middle East who condemned the Turco-Iraqi Pact were in favour of the Egyptian/Syrian Pact. What we would like to see would be a comprehensive system of defence in the area in the interests of all the countries concerned. I sincerely hoped that Syria would not commit herself to a step which would prejudice her ultimate co-operation with such a system.

4. Khalid al Azm seemed to misunderstand my point and launched into an explanation of how Syria was by no means a Communist or a Communist-sympathising country. The Russians had adopted on many occasions a more friendly attitude towards the Arabs than had the West. It was only natural that the Arabs should take this into account. The Western Powers, by their support for Israel, were prejudicing Arab goodwill. Israel continued to flout the United Nations, yet we still supported her. What he asked for was impartiality, but it seemed that the Americans, the French and we were more partial to Israel than to the Arabs. I caught him up on this and pointed out that it was largely due to the British in the First World War that the Arab States had achieved their independence. The Arabs ought to remember this. As far as Israel was concerned, if M. Khalid al Azm was sitting in my chair he would know how I had to listen to the same sort of complaints of partiality from the Israeli Ambassador. With regard to the United Nations, we were only one of sixty members, so why should we be to blame if United Nations resolutions were not carried out.

5. I noticed that the situation on the Syrian frontier was much more satisfactory than on, say, the Egyptian frontier. I hoped this situation would continue and improve. It was in the interests of all concerned that one day some sort of settlement should be reached. Our policy in the Middle East was easy to define but difficult to carry out. We wanted the unity and well-being of the area and an effective defence system between all its States to resist aggression. The Syrians need not fear the Iraqis, who had made it plain that they respected Syrian independence.



6. Khalid al Azm repeated once more that the Egyptian/Syrian Pact was not directed against Iraq. It was a necessary step by the Arabs to protect themselves against Israel. At the prompting of the Chargé d'Affaires, he then asked if we would look into the question of spare parts, over which the Syrian Military Attaché was having some difficulty with the supplying firm. I suggested that this could be taken up usefully with the Department concerned.

7. I ended by saying that I hoped His Excellency had not minded me speaking frankly to him about our point of view, to which he replied that he was glad to have had this talk and trusted that I, for my part, did not mind his speaking equally frankly.

8. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bagdad, Beirut, B.M.E.O., Cairo, Jedda, Paris and Washington.

I am, &c.

HAROLD MACMILLAN.

VY 1015/50

No. 5

**ASSESSMENT OF THE POSSIBLE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RECENT ARREST OF A NUMBER OF ARMY OFFICERS AND CIVILIANS**

*Mr. Gallagher to Mr. Macmillan. (Received July 25)*

(No. 89. Secret)  
Sir,

Damascus,  
July 20, 1955.

Although it is difficult to obtain reliable information about the political activities of various groups of Syrian army officers, it would seem that the recent arrest of a small number of officers and civilians, reported in my telegram No. 277, of the 15th of July, may have a special significance.

2. During the Shishakli régime, officers with known Left-wing sympathies were either dismissed from the Army or sent to military detention camps on charges of plotting against the security of the State. With the end of the military dictatorship, these officers were reinstated and, in certain cases, were given rapid promotion and posts of importance to compensate for the treatment they had earlier received. Their position was reinforced by their membership of, or sympathy with, the Baath-Socialist Party which, since February 1955, has been one of the main elements of the coalition Government. The progressive Left-wing policy of this party and its tactical co-operation in the Chamber with the leader of the Syrian Communist Party has made it an obvious target for Communist penetration; and some of the Army officers who were reinstated and promoted are believed to be fellow-travellers, if not convinced Communists.

3. In an Army divided into a number of political factions and showing marked signs of unrest, this compact group of officers, with a definite policy and marked determination of purpose, quickly made their influence felt. Under the energetic leadership of Colonel Adnan Malki, who as Head of the Third Bureau ensured that some of his supporters were posted to key positions, they have become a political force of considerable importance in Syria. It has been said that the country is now run by about fifty army officers and there is some evidence (confirmed by secret sources) to show that these in turn have appointed a revolutionary council of seven or eight officers on the Egyptian model. It is under their command that the military police carried out the recent arrests and they wield considerable influence over the military courts.

4. The objectives of this group are not altogether clear; but it would seem that they share the ultra-nationalist and Left-wing views of the Baath-Socialist Party in both domestic and foreign affairs and would like to see them applied more vigorously in practice. They are opposed to any alliances which, in their view, would weaken Syrian independence, and their hostility to the Fertile Crescent scheme and to the Turco-Iraqi Pact lends to their activities a strong anti-Iraqi and anti-Western bias. On the other hand, they favour the tripartite pact as a *riposte* to what they regard as Iraq's desertion of the Arab cause and as a means of forging closer links between Syria and the authoritarian and neutralist régimes of Egypt and Saudi Arabia. The concept of a unified Arab army, as provided for in the tripartite pact, with its headquarters in Damascus, also attracts them professionally as it opens up prospects of promotion to high rank which are necessarily limited in their own small service.

5. The activities of this group have hitherto been circumscribed by a number of factors. In the first place, the existence of a coalition Government in which the Left wing is represented and which is prepared to align itself to some extent with this faction of the Army on such matters as the tripartite pact and the supply of arms from France has meant that the group have had no compelling need to take drastic action. Secondly, they have managed to secure the support of the weak and vacillating Chief of staff who is prepared to act as their spokesman and possibly to accept certain of their nominees in senior positions on the General Headquarters Staff and elsewhere. It was, in fact, General Shukair who earlier this year suggested to the Prime Minister that he should dismiss Parliament and rule with military support (see Damascus telegram No. 175 of the 14th of April). Lastly, this group have had to face the fact that their political views are not shared



by the Army as a whole and that there is probably sufficient opposition from other officers to foil an attempted Left-wing *coup d'état*. This delicate balancing of political forces within the Army probably explains why Syria has not so far reverted to a military régime.

6. It is therefore reasonable to assume that the elimination, or, at all events, the neutralisation of their political opponents within the Army and, where possible, outside, has become one of the principal objectives of the group. The assassination of Colonel Malki in April, while depriving them of dynamic leadership, enabled them to wage a campaign of persecution against the Right wing and pro-Iraqi Parti Populaire Syrien. Officers and N.C.O.s known or suspected to be associated with this party were arrested on a charge of membership of an illegal political organisation and are now gradually being brought to trial. The exact number in prison has never been revealed but is believed to be about 200. This campaign did not, however, involve those officers who, while not identified with any particular party, are generally pro-Western and pro-Iraqi in outlook. These officers, most of whom take a strictly professional view of the Army's role, are believed to have become increasingly disturbed by the Army's intervention in politics and the accommodating attitude of the Chief of Staff towards the Left-wing element. It seems that they were organising some sort of protest to General Shukair (and may even have been manoeuvring for his dismissal) and this was used as an excuse for the recent arrests. It also enabled the Chief of Staff to explain subsequently that the arrests were due to disciplinary reasons.

7. This explanation is not, however, convincing. The arrests included three brigade commanders of the rank of Colonel. Other officers are understood to be under house arrest, including the Head of the Syrian Air Force who, it is said, will be sent to a subordinate post on the Euphrates. Moreover, the Director of Police and Security in Aleppo and the Director of Customs at Lattakia have also been arrested. All those concerned, in so far as their political views are known, are Right wing and pro-Iraqi. It therefore seems that these arrests are a continuation of the policy of the Left-wing group of removing potential opposition in the Army and among key civilian officials in order to facilitate the execution of their plans.

8. It is also significant that these events have coincided with the issue by the military police of warrants of arrest against Husni Barazi (Personalities No. 22), the owner of the newspaper *NAS*, and his editor on charges of "insulting the Army." This paper has been consistently pro-Western and has published remarkably outspoken articles against Communism, army intervention in politics and the tripartite pact. At the same time it has strongly advocated Syrian membership of the Turco-Iraqi alliance. Barazi has left the country and is believed to be in the Lebanon.

9. On the evidence so far available, I do not consider that the recent arrests and the suppression of *NAS* necessarily indicate that a Left-wing *coup d'état* is imminent. But it seems certain that the group of Left-wing officers are strengthening their position and gradually clearing the decks for possible action in the future. The slow progress being made in negotiating the tripartite pact, the forthcoming Presidential election in which the Army will undoubtedly bring influence to bear to try to secure the election of its chosen candidate, and the possibility of a new government in the autumn with a rather different political complexion from the present coalition, may give this group an excuse to oust the politicians and take over control. In doing so, they would probably command the support of those pro-Shishakli officers who have managed to re-establish themselves in the Army and appear to be willing to co-operate with the Left wing.

10. Meanwhile, these events have two immediate consequences for us. Firstly, the removal of the Head of the Syrian Air Force will certainly prejudice the close connection which has been built up between that service and the Royal Air Force and for which Colonel Kailani was largely responsible. It was mainly through him that the policy of purchasing British aircraft and equipment and sending Syrian pilots and technicians to the United Kingdom for training was initiated. This policy has recently been called in question (see correspondence ending with my letter (11906/8/55) of the 16th of July to Mr. Rose) and it seems likely that Colonel Kailani's championship of the British connection was in some measure responsible for his downfall. Secondly, the action taken against

*NAS* has deprived us of an influential newspaper which could be relied upon to put forward the Western viewpoint with considerable eloquence and force. The other Right-wing papers will now be chary of taking a pro-Western line, particularly on matters such as the Turco-Iraqi pact on which the Army are liable to be sensitive. We may therefore find it increasingly difficult to ensure that our case does not go by default.

11. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris, Washington, Amman, Ankara, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo and Jedda; and to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

F. G. K. GALLAGHER.



VY 1015/52

No. 6

DEVELOPMENT OVER THE PAST YEAR OF A MORE FAVOURABLE  
ATTITUDE IN SYRIA TO GENERAL SHISHAKLI

*Mr. Gallagher to Mr. Macmillan. (Received August 2)*

(No. 90. Confidential)  
Sir,

Damascus,  
July 27, 1955.

I have the honour to report that, during the past year, there has been a significant change in Syria in the attitude of the Government and the general public towards General Shishakli, the former military dictator, those people who were prominent during his régime and the Arab Liberation Movement (A.L.M.), the political party which he founded in 1953 to support him in the Chamber.

2. When the military régime collapsed in February 1954 and Shishakli left the country public opinion, inflamed by the Left wing, was strongly set against him. There was an almost audible sigh of relief that Syria had rid herself of a tyrant and a traitor who had worked against the real interests of his country which was now to enjoy once again the full benefits of a democratic Constitution. This reaction was no doubt partly due to the Arab tendency to change sides quickly and to support the man in power at the moment; but there was also a genuine feeling that Shishakli's ruthlessness and tyrannical methods could not be tolerated any longer.

3. The immediate result was an effort to eradicate all traces of the Shishakli régime. The A.L.M. was dissolved, a parliamentary committee was established to review all legislation passed during the military dictatorship and to decide which laws and decrees should be discarded, and a purge of army officers and officials who had been prominent during the former régime was put in hand. This work was begun with enthusiasm; but as party political problems became more pressing, the anti-Shishakli movement lost a great deal of its impetus. By the end of the year there had been a marked reaction. Former Shishakli supporters were coming into the open and, as the memories of the evil days of the military dictatorship receded, there was a general disposition on the part of the public to take a man at his face value and not to penalise him for doing his duty in difficult circumstances.

4. Thereafter, many people who had been prominent during the Shishakli régime were able to rehabilitate themselves. This was most noticeable in the army where officers who had escaped the purge were posted to influential positions, some of them receiving special promotion. These officers were undoubtedly able by Syrian standards; but many of them were pure opportunists who were only too willing to co-operate with the strong Left-wing element in the army as a means of advancement.

5. Meanwhile, the same process was taking place outside the army. The A.L.M. was declared by the courts to be a legal political organisation and its premises and equipment, which had been confiscated when Shishakli left the country, were restored. A number of Shishakli supporters were returned to Parliament at the elections held in September 1954. Maamoun Kuzbari, Speaker of Parliament during the Shishakli régime and therefore next in precedence to the dictator, who had made a vain attempt to perpetuate the military régime immediately after Shishakli's departure, was appointed Minister of Justice in the Assali Cabinet formed in February of this year—a position which he still holds. Assad Mohaffel, the Secretary-General of the Presidency of the Republic during the Shishakli régime and a close associate of the dictator, has been brought out of retirement and appointed Syrian Minister in Tehran. The A.L.M. has resumed its political activities although it is handicapped by the low calibre of its members, many of its more prominent supporters having thrown in their lot with one of the traditional political parties.

6. These developments reflect a change of attitude on the part of the general public. A number of responsible Syrians have expressed to me their regret at the passing of the Shishakli régime. It was a period of stability, increasing prosperity and material development—advantages which, in the view of many Syrians, outweighed the disadvantages inherent in a military dictatorship. It was the type of strong government which suited the needs of a still politically immature country;

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and it has been exchanged for political instability, the personal rivalries of leading politicians, a deteriorating economic situation and all the trappings of a police State, with a divided army still trying to exercise control although less obviously than before. It is therefore not surprising that the news (subsequently denied) that the Syrian Foreign Minister had met Shishakli during the former's recent visit to Paris excited great interest here and led to articles in the pro-Government Press praising Shishakli as a great patriot and protagonist of Syrian independence. Even the Opposition Press, which criticised the meeting, gave the impression that its attack was directed more against Khalid al Azm than against the former dictator.

7. It is interesting to speculate whether this change of attitude foreshadows the return of Shishakli to Syria to resume his former position after a military *coup d'état*. This would be contrary to historical precedent, but it nevertheless remains a possibility. The army is still the determining factor in Syrian politics. At present it is dominated by a group of Left-wing officers who would not hesitate to take drastic action if they considered it necessary and felt that the army as a whole would support them (see my despatch No. 89 (11901/818/55) of the 20th of July). As stated above, there is evidence that the pro-Shishakli officers are co-operating with this group primarily as a means of obtaining positions of influence. Nevertheless, they have much in common. The pro-Shishakli element, like the dictator, are hostile to Iraq and believe in a policy of neutrality. They have a natural sympathy for the military régime in Egypt and could be expected to favour the tripartite pact for both political and professional reasons. Moreover, in domestic matters, Shishakli pursued a mildly "progressive" policy which would provide another bond between his supporters and the Left wing. More important, perhaps, is the fact that the Shishakli supporters in the army can provide in the former dictator the strong man to take over control after a *coup d'état*. The Left wing contains no outstanding figure who could fill this role and has therefore had to create a small revolutionary committee on the Egyptian model as a substitute.

8. It is clear too, that Shishakli himself does not exclude the possibility of returning to Syria. His brother, Salah Shishakli, attempted to come back here earlier this year but was promptly expelled. I hear from a very reliable source that he has since been living in the Lebanon where he maintains contact with Shishakli supporters in Syria. He told my informant that his function was to watch the situation closely and to let the ex-dictator know when the time was ripe for the latter's return to Syria. It appears from Beirut telegram No. 555 that Shishakli now rates his chances sufficiently high to establish himself in the Lebanon. This is a significant development and supports the view expressed in my despatch No. 89 that the deterioration of the political situation here, coupled with the delay in the signature of the tripartite pact, may prompt the army to take over complete control during the coming months.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Washington, Paris, Amman, Ankara, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo and Jedda; and to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

F. G. K. GALLAGHER.

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VY 1015/73

No. 7

REPORT ON THE ELECTION OF SHUKRI QUWATLY AS PRESIDENT  
OF THE SYRIAN REPUBLIC

Mr. Gallagher to Mr. Macmillan. (Received September 1)

(No. 94. Confidential) Damascus,  
Sir, August 24, 1955.

With reference to my telegram No. 311 of the 18th of August, I have the honour to report that Shukri Quwatly (Personalities No. 81) was elected President of the Syrian Republic on the 18th of August. He will begin his five-year term of office on the 6th of September, when the official inauguration ceremonies will be held, thus returning to the Presidency to which he has twice previously been elected and from which he was forcibly removed in 1949 by Colonel Husni Zaim, the leader of the first military *coup d'État*.

2. The election of Shukri Quwatly was the result of intricate party manoeuvres which continued until shortly before voting took place. However, Shukri Bey's election seemed assured when the Nationalist Party adopted him as their candidate with the support of the Right-wing independents and when the Populists stated that they would not put forward a candidate of their own but would vote with the Nationalists. Meanwhile, the Left-wing Baath-Socialist Party announced their support for the candidature of the Foreign Minister, Khalid al Azm, who could also count on the votes of the majority of his Democratic *bloc* of Deputies and the Left-wing independents. The conflict thus resolved itself into one between Right and Left, and it was clear that Quwatly would win by a comfortable majority.

3. As a result, there was an absence of tension or expectancy in the atmosphere when 139 of the 142 Deputies assembled in the Chamber to elect the President on the 18th of August. At the first ballot, 89 votes were cast for Quwatly and 42 for Azm, the former narrowly failing to secure the necessary two-thirds majority. The figures were similar at the second ballot, Quwatly receiving 91 votes and Azm 41. Quwatly, having obtained an absolute majority, was declared elected. It is indicative of the holiday mood of the Deputies that one of the invalid papers at the first ballot bore the name of the Saudi Arabian Ambassador in Damascus; the *riposte* came at the second ballot in the form of a vote cast for Nuri Said.

4. Press comment on the election of Quwatly has, with few exceptions, been

tinged with caution and reserve. The organs of those elements which supported the candidature of Khalid al Azm have recalled that Syria is now back where she was in 1948 before the succession of military *coups d'État* which destroyed her stability. Right-wing and independent newspapers have welcomed the new President, but have drawn his attention to the country's many problems and to the changes that have taken place in Syria during his six years of absence. It is probable that this note of cautious optimism reflects the general feeling in the country.

5. I paid a courtesy call on Shukri Bey on the day after his election. He saw me alone and spoke at some length about the work to which he now proposed to devote himself. As President, he said, his object would be to restore to Syria the greatest possible degree of political stability. The country needed a respite from party quarrels and violent changes of régime in order to concentrate on the essential task of economic development. The events of the past six years had produced nervous stress and uncertainty about the future. A period of tranquillity was now necessary to restore the people's peace of mind and to ensure that the country's institutions functioned normally. Shukri Bey then spoke, with apparent sincerity, about his warm regard for the British and his war-time connexion with us. He recalled the decisive part which Her Majesty's Ambassador had played at that stage of his career and said that he would work wholeheartedly to improve Anglo-Syrian relations. This led him to speak of our educational system of which he was a firm advocate. His elder son, who has been studying in England, would be going to Cambridge in the autumn and he hoped shortly to send his younger son to a British public school.

6. I am reporting separately on the effect of Quwatly's election on the political situation.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jedda, Paris and Washington and to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

F. G. K. GALLAGHER.

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No. 8

ELECTION OF SHUKRI QUWATLY AS PRESIDENT OF THE SYRIAN  
REPUBLIC: AN ASSESSMENT OF POSSIBLE POLITICAL  
CONSEQUENCES

Mr. Gallagher to Mr. Macmillan. (Received September 1)

(No. 96. Confidential) Damascus,  
Sir, August 24, 1955.

In my despatch No. 94 of the 24th of August, 1955, I reported the election of Shukri Quwatly as President of the Syrian Republic, an appointment which he will normally hold for five years. I now have the honour to submit an assessment of the probable results of that election on the political situation in Syria during the coming months.

2. The new President, in spite of many failings, is perhaps the only man in Syria who is regarded by a large section of the population as the symbol of national independence. As such, he commands the support of people of widely different political views. His association with the Nationalist movement goes back to the last years of the Ottoman Empire and he subsequently proved a troublesome thorn in the side of the French. Elected President of Syria in 1943, he held this office until 1949 when he was forcibly removed by Husni Zaim, who engineered the first of the series of military *coups d'état*. Thereafter, he lived in Alexandria (generously subsidised, so it is said, by the late King Ibn Saud) and, apart from a brief reappearance in Damascus last year, remained in exile until a few weeks before the presidential election. His long absence from Syria makes him something of an unknown quantity and even the Right-wing press have not hesitated to remind him of the many changes which have taken place in Syria since 1949 and to give him some frank advice on the problems to which he should now address himself.

3. At first sight, the election of Shukri Bey is not altogether reassuring. Originally the leader of the movement for Syrian independence, he is now primarily a party politician and it is doubtful whether, as President, he will have the foresight and ability to subordinate his allegiance to the Nationalist Party and to the feudal aristocracy of the country to the need to exercise his functions impartially. Moreover, in spite of the support on which he

could undoubtedly count in the Chamber and among the general public he probably owes his election to the unpopularity of his rival, Khalid al Azm, and to the fact that the latter was supported by the Left. Shukri Bey's previous tenure of office, which covered the period of the Palestine War, was far from satisfactory. He was surrounded by a group of self-seeking advisers who secured promotion for themselves and their friends and corruption was rife. He made many enemies among the leading politicians and antagonised the Army who were responsible for his downfall in 1949. Since then he has identified himself closely with Egyptian and Saudi interests and has given consistent support to the tripartite pact.

4. Nevertheless, the new President has a forceful personality and a degree of determination bordering on obstinacy. He will undoubtedly exercise his influence to the limits permitted by the Constitution and may therefore prove to be an important factor in charting the future course of Syrian political life. Whether this influence is beneficial will depend on the lessons he has learned from his past political mistakes. The extent to which it can be exerted will depend on the political situation brought about by his election and on the attitude of the Army.

5. The election of the new President, which became a conflict between the Right- and Left-wing elements in the Chamber, has brought to an end the unnatural coalition of Nationalists and Left-wing groups which has held office since February last. Shukri Bey was supported by Nationalists, Populists and Right-wing independents who together were able to muster ninety-one votes out of a total of 139. If this alliance can be held together, the new Government which will be formed after the President is inaugurated on the 6th of September, should be reasonably stable. Unfortunately, the composition of the new Cabinet may not prove an easy task. The Populists, who decided not to put forward a presidential candidate of their own but

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to support Quwatly, are in a strong bargaining position and, as they are in the main pro-Western, this is satisfactory from our standpoint. But, in spite of a superficial community of interests, their relations with the Nationalist Party are uneasy. The personal animosities which brought about the collapse of the Khoury Government in February last are still smouldering; and the question of the tripartite pact to which the Populists are opposed and on which the Nationalists are divided (see my letter (11901/836/55) of the 3rd of August to Mr. Rose) may still prove to be a formidable bone of contention. Negotiations are now in train for the formation of the new Government. There are already signs that the Populists are demanding too high a price for their support of Quwatly and may therefore have to constitute a Cabinet without the participation of the Nationalists. Alternatively, a coalition Government under a "neutral" Prime Minister is always a possibility.

6. Whatever the form the new Government takes, it will be faced with a strong and united Opposition in the Chamber. During the tenure of office of the Assali Cabinet, the Left—consisting of the Democratic bloc, the Baath-Socialist Party and the Communist leader, Khalid Bikdash—have been to some extent muzzled by their support of the Government. The presidential election has clarified the political situation and, for some time to come, the Left can be expected to remain in the opposition and to make the most of their opportunities. They will probably concentrate on two points: the speedy conclusion of the tripartite pact and the negotiations between the Government and the Iraq Petroleum Company. In these circumstances it is doubtful whether the new Government will feel able to take a firm line. Both issues arouse strong popular feeling which will no doubt be inflamed by Left-wing propaganda. So far as the tripartite pact is concerned the Opposition know that the President, unlike his predecessor, is unlikely to challenge it on constitutional grounds and may even discreetly encourage its signature in return for help received from Egypt and Saudi Arabia in the past. The Government may, therefore, try first to delay the conclusion of the pact in the hope that it will be eventually forgotten and, failing this, to propose a looser form of alliance, open to all Arab States, which would amount to little more than a strengthening of the Collective Security

Pact. As regards the I.P.C., pressure on the company from the Government and the Chamber is likely to continue until a new agreement is signed.

7. Meanwhile, as reported in my despatches Nos. 89 and 90 of the 20th and the 27th of July respectively, intervention by the Army remains an ever-present possibility. It is no secret that the strong Left-wing faction in the Army and, indeed, the Chief of Staff himself favoured Azm's election to the presidency in spite of differences between them. Quwatly, on the other hand, is unpopular with the Army due mainly to the circumstances which led to the *coup d'état* in 1949 and the fact that he is the leader of a Right-wing party. The new President, however, has done his best to placate the Army by promising, in his first public statement after his election, to provide modern military equipment, and his known support for the tripartite pact may also help him to gain the Army's confidence. The general view here is that the Army do not intend to intervene for the time being and that they will allow Quwatly a reasonable period of probation to see what attitude he adopts on major political questions. But, from now on, there is likely to be a close association between the Army and the Opposition which will greatly strengthen the position of the latter in the Chamber. The recent visit of Shishakli to the Lebanon, which was widely reported in the Syrian press, has strengthened the belief that the Army are preparing the ground for a Left-wing *coup d'état* should the need arise.

8. In spite of the factors making for a further period of uncertainty in Syrian politics, it is, I think, permissible to be cautiously optimistic about the immediate future. The new President has told me that political stability will be his first concern. If he is prepared to exert his authority impartially over the contending forces and to use his strength of character and determination to this end, he stands a reasonable chance of success. The clear-cut division between Right and Left which has emerged as the result of his election should assist him in this task, since the material is to hand from which a solid and stable Government could be formed if the politicians can be persuaded to sink their differences. The Army have apparently allowed him breathing-space and, if he can win over this disruptive element to his side by appealing to their undoubted patriotism (or if, as is believed to be his intention, he can find a

way of replacing the present Chief of Staff by a better candidate pledged to keep the Army out of politics), he may succeed in removing one of the greatest dangers to political stability. This is a formidable task and, in the uncertain atmosphere of Syrian political life, it is by no means certain that he will succeed. But, even if he is only partly successful, there is a reasonable chance of a gradual evolution of Syrian policy in our favour. I would not expect any Syrian Government to depart from a policy of strict neutrality between East and West for a very long time to

come; but, once the I.P.C. negotiations are satisfactorily concluded, the stage would be set under a Right-wing Government for a cautious approach to better relations with the West.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Amman, Ankara, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jedda, Paris, Washington and to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

F. G. K. GALLAGHER.



VY 1113/9

No. 9

## THE SYRIAN BUDGET FOR 1955

*Mr. Gallagher to Mr. Macmillan. (Received September 10)*(No. 99 E. Confidential)  
Sir,Damascus,  
September 5, 1955.

With reference to Mr. Cranston's letter C.S. 409 (73/13/55) of the 16th of August to Levant Department, I have the honour to report that the Budget for 1955 was passed by the Syrian Parliament and signed by the President of the Republic on August 17. The total published figure for expenditure in 1955 is £Syrian 260,570,000. This compares with £Syrian 208,000,000 in 1954 and £Syrian 205,000,000 in 1953. A translation of Decree No. 106 of the 17th of August, giving details of the estimated revenue and expenditure during the current financial year, together with the comparable figures for last year, is enclosed.<sup>(1)</sup> The detailed departmental allocations have not yet been published but will be forwarded as soon as they are available.

2. The increase over last year's budget of £Syrian 52,500,000 is an indication of the steady expansion of Syria's economy. The additional revenue has been derived mainly from direct and indirect taxation distributed as follows:—

	£Syrian
Direct taxation ... ..	13,000,000
Indirect taxation and dues ... ..	17,000,000
Registration Fees ... ..	8,000,000
Miscellaneous and Public Services revenues ... ..	14,500,000

3. The allocation of expenditure reflects the contrast between the policy of the present Government, which emphasises the importance of supporting Syria's economy and providing educational facilities, and that of the Shishakli régime when priority was given to military requirements. In the 1955 budget, the allocation to the Ministry of National Defence has been reduced by £Syrian 1½ millions. The decrease in the Ministry's share in the increased budget, from 40 per cent. to approximately 33 per cent. is, however, proportionally greater. The Departments which have chiefly benefited by increased allocations are:—

	£Syrian
The Gendarmerie ... ..	15,000,000
This Department was absorbed into the Army during the Shishakli régime and was subsequently reconstituted as a separate Department under the Ministry of the Interior.	
The Ministry of Education: an additional ... ..	11,500,000
The Ministry of Finance: an additional ... ..	9,000,000
The Ministry of Public Works: an additional ... ..	6,000,000

Most other Departments have received increases of from £Syrian 1 to 1½ millions, which would represent a normal increase in the cost of administration in keeping with the general rise of prices and services throughout the world.

4. Further evidence of the Government's desire to strengthen and expand Syria's economic development is shown by the approval, given in Parliament on the 13th of August, of a special Six-Year Development Budget, totalling £Syrian 659,899,613. The official Decree giving the details of this budget has not yet been published and it will be reported when it appears. This special budget provides, for the completion or undertaking of major development schemes such as roads, railways, a new aerodrome at Damascus, major irrigation works, the Ghab Valley Drainage Project and Lattakia Port.

5. In view of the serious economic position that has existed in Syria for the greater part of this year, and the shortage of funds as a result of the failure of the grain crops, it is questionable how much of the money allowed for in the budgets is, in fact, available. It is believed that the revenue from current taxation and

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

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public services, together with reserves carried over from last year, is sufficient for the needs of the annual budget. A small additional sum is probably in hand to enable a beginning to be made on development schemes other than those already in hand. The bulk of the revenue required for development will, however, have to come from future revenue and possibly from an International Bank loan. Nevertheless, the belated adoption of these budgets will help to restore economic confidence in the country. There are now good prospects for the cotton crop and this should produce revenue which may go some way towards offsetting the losses incurred by the grain failure. It should also encourage industrialists, farmers and traders as well as Government officials to resuscitate the economic and administrative life of the country which has been stagnant for the last few months.

6. It would be a mistake, none the less, to conclude from the outward appearance of the budget that the place and role of the Army is now entirely secondary and that it might be unable to obtain the funds it needs for major military purchases. In Syria it is customary for some of the expenditure on military equipment and armaments to be met from reserve and secret funds and from concealed credits allocated to other Departments, the details of which are never made public. There is no reason to suppose that this system will not continue in the future and it may be accepted that the Army will always be able to obtain the money that it requires for extraordinary expenditure even though it may encounter greater resistance than before from a Parliament which would rather devote revenue to the economic needs of the country.

7. Although the annual budget has been passed only two weeks before a new Government is due to be formed, there is no reason to think that it will be repudiated by the next Government. The greater part of the expenditure for the current year has already been made and the adoption of the budget at this late stage, although useful psychologically, is little more than a device to provide the Government with the means to carry out its normal functions until the end of the year.

8. I am sending copies of this despatch, together with its enclosure, to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Amman, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo and Tel Aviv, to the Head of the British Middle East Office, Nicosia, to the Head of the Development Division of the British Middle East Office, Beirut, to the Treasury Representative (Middle East), Cairo, to the Commercial Relations and Exports Department, Board of Trade, to the Export Credits Guarantee Department and to Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo.

I have, &amp;c.

F. G. K. GALLAGHER.

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VY 1015/87

No. 10

## THE NEW SYRIAN GOVERNMENT

*Mr. Gallagher to Mr. Macmillan. (Received September 26)*(No. 106. Confidential) *Damascus,*  
Sir, *September 21, 1955.*

With reference to my telegram No. 346 of the 14th of September, I have the honour to report that, following the resignation of the Assali Government on the 6th of September as required by the Constitution on the inauguration of the newly-elected President of the Republic, a new Cabinet was formed under Said Ghazzi (Independent) on the 13th of September.

2. In spite of preliminary consultations among political leaders, no Government was ready to take office on the 6th of September. This was partly due to the obstinacy of the President of the Republic who, instead of calling on the Right-wing parties which had co-operated to secure his election and which commanded a clear-cut majority in the Chamber, tried to form an all-party Government. This may have been due to his desire to establish a reputation for impartiality on assuming office; it may also have been due to his ignorance, after six years' absence from Syria, of the wide differences in policy which now divide the Right from the Left. At all events, the attempt was doomed to failure. Said Ghazzi, a "neutral" and respected figure, tried his hand but had to give up after the Left-wing Baath-Socialist Party refused to co-operate and their allies, the Democratic bloc, refused to be committed.

3. The President then asked Ghazzi to form a more limited coalition, relying primarily on the Right-wing groups. By then, however, the majority which had elected Quwatly, was beginning to disintegrate and, in the process of hard political bargaining which followed, the chronic rivalries between Nationalists and Populists, based on suspicion and personal animosities, came to the fore. The latter were in a strong position since, having refrained from putting forward a presidential candidate of their own, they had ensured the success of Quwatly and were now ready to receive their reward. A squabble over portfolios followed and, as a result, the Nationalists refused to participate in the new Government. (Their spokesmen have subsequently said that they will join the Baath-Socialists in forming the Opposition.) The upshot

was that part of the Democratic bloc, breaking their alliance with the Baath-Socialists, were brought into the Cabinet to give it a comfortable majority in the Chamber.

4. The new Government, although an improvement on its predecessor, is an illogical grouping of parties which is likely to perpetuate the instability which has characterised Syrian political life since the fall of Shishakli in February 1954. Its support is drawn from the Populists, the Constitutional bloc and a small group of Independents on the Right and part at least of the Democratic bloc on the Left. The choice of a "neutral" Prime Minister, who is also Minister for Foreign Affairs, was clearly intended to prevent these two major portfolios from becoming a bone of contention among the coalition parties, thus complicating the task of Cabinet making. Said Ghazzi has a reputation for integrity and impartiality, and the Government which he led at the time of the general election in September 1954, emerged from the ordeal of supervising the ballot with flying colours. He is also said to be acceptable to the army. Nevertheless, he is not a forceful character and lacks a personal following in the Chamber. He is therefore unlikely to be able to control his heterogeneous team with a strong hand or to impose his own moderate views on his Cabinet colleagues. Indeed, one of his first tasks was to reconstitute the Cabinet on the day after he had taken office in order to deal with internal dissension and to give the Populists the Ministry of the Interior—a portfolio which they had apparently claimed but failed to acquire at an earlier stage (see my telegram No. 348). It is therefore not surprising that public opinion is not disposed to give the new Government a long lease of life.

5. In these circumstances, it was only to be expected that the new Government's statement of policy, in its attempt to reconcile the conflicting views of the coalition parties, should have taken a long time to prepare. Almost continuous Cabinet meetings have taken place during the past week and the final result, which was read to the Chamber yesterday by the Prime Minister and will be debated on the

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22nd of September, represents a carefully balanced compromise. In view of the major issues facing Syria on foreign and Arab affairs—Mr. Dulles's statement, the Johnston Plan, the Tripartite Pact and the negotiations with the Iraq Petroleum Company—this part of the statement, of which I enclose a translation,<sup>(1)</sup> is of particular interest. It shows the influence of both the Populists, who are in the main pro-Iraqi and pro-Western but against "foreign" pacts at all events for the time being, and the Democratic bloc, who support the Tripartite Pact and are firmly opposed to peace with Israel.

6. Thus, as a concession to the Left, there is the usual denunciation of Israel and a blunt refusal to take part in peace negotiations. It is difficult to say at this stage how far such a statement commits the Government to a hostile attitude towards Mr. Dulles's statement. It may well be that such a definite declaration of policy which is common form need not be taken too seriously. I still consider that, in the last analysis, Syria will be influenced by the attitude of Egypt and Iraq (see my telegram No. 330). The Populists have clearly made their views felt on the Tripartite Pact. Negotiations are to continue, but the pact will be open to all Arab States although the obligations which some of them have entered into with non-Arab States will not bind the others. This would seem to be a firm bid for Iraqi and Jordanian participation and represents a move away from the Syrian conception of a closely-knit, supranational tripartite alliance towards an arrangement which would amount to little more than the strengthening of the Collective Security Pact. Indeed, there is already some doubt whether the Democratic bloc as a whole (as opposed to the Ministers from this group) are prepared to accept such an emasculating of the Tripartite Pact. The

brief reference to negotiations with the I.P.C. is satisfactory. It should help to keep popular agitation to a minimum and enable the discussions which are due to be resumed later this week to take place in a calmer atmosphere. No mention is made of the Johnston Plan, no doubt because it is due to be discussed at the meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers early next month.

7. The section of the Prime Minister's statement dealing with internal affairs is on familiar lines. The remedies proposed to deal with Syria's present economic difficulties represent a continuation of the policy of the Assali Government. The longer-term plans for development and the introduction of social services are already generally accepted and are unlikely to cause political controversy.

8. It is too early to predict the effect which the new Government is likely to have on the future shape of Syrian policy. Much will depend on how long it can manage to remain in office and how far it can resist the pressure which will undoubtedly be brought to bear by the Right- and Left-wing elements of the Opposition. In spite of a few excellent appointments (e.g., the Minister of National Economy), the Cabinet as a whole is weak; there are already signs of some dissension; and the interplay of personal rivalries and party manoeuvres may well stultify the well-meaning efforts of the Prime Minister and bring about the fall of the Government before it has had a reasonable opportunity to put its policies to the test.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jedda, Tel Aviv, Paris and Washington; and to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &amp;c.

F. G. K. GALLAGHER.

<sup>(1)</sup> Not printed.

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VY 1051/90

No. 11

DEBATE IN THE SYRIAN CHAMBER PRECEDING THE VOTE OF  
CONFIDENCE FOR SAID GHAZZI'S GOVERNMENT

*Mr. Gallagher to Mr. Macmillan. (Received October 3)*

(No. 108. Confidential)  
Sir,

Damascus,  
September 28, 1955.

With reference to my telegram No. 362 of the 25th of September I have the honour to report that the Government of Said Ghazzi obtained a vote of confidence on the 24th of September by 88 votes to 31 with 3 abstentions. The remaining Deputies, 20 in number, were not present in the Chamber.

2. In the debate which preceded the vote almost all the speakers were from the parties not represented in the coalition. Their main theme was opposition to the Turco-Iraqi Pact and criticism of the Government's proposal to pursue discussions with the other Arab States with a view to the conclusion of a new Arab pact. Fakher Kayyali, a member of the Nationalist Party and a former Minister who was closely associated with previous discussions on the tripartite pact, maintained that agreement had been reached with Egypt and Saudi Arabia on most points. He disclosed that the three countries had agreed on the proportions which each would contribute to the joint fund for defence purposes; Egypt would provide 45 per cent. of the money, while Saudi Arabia and Syria would provide 40 per cent. and 15 per cent. respectively. The principal obstacles to final agreement had been Syria's economic difficulties and the imminence of the Presidential elections, but now Dr. Kayyali could see no reason why the Government should seek to widen the basis of the tripartite pact. Other Nationalist speakers maintained that to abandon the tripartite pact would be to defer to the views of Britain and the United States who wished to divert the enmity of the Arabs from Israel, the real danger, to Russia.

3. The criticism of members of the Baath-Socialist Party, the other main Opposition group, was also mainly directed against that part of the Government's statement which dealt with Arab and foreign policy. They supported the Nationalist attitude towards the tripartite pact and the proposed new Arab pact, and went on to criticise the Government's silence on Mr. Dulles' proposals. They made it clear that they opposed any plan the aim of which was peace with Israel, and Akram Hawrani, the Socialist leader, said that his party was equally opposed to the Johnston plan for exploitation of the Jordan waters. He asked for clarification of the Government's attitude towards these two questions and also asked whether the Government were prepared to buy arms from Russia. Other Baath-Socialist speakers criticised the omission from Said Ghazzi's speech of any reference to negotiations with the oil companies and made this the pretext for attacks on the companies which, they said, were guilty of imperialist exploitation.

4. Replying to the debate, the Prime Minister said it would be impossible for him to deal with all the matters which had been raised. The Government had said they would continue discussions on the tripartite pact and this they would do as soon as the former Foreign Minister handed over the papers dealing with this question which were still in his possession. The Government would not enter into peace negotiations with Israel and they considered that Mr. Dulles' proposals were put forward with that end in view. Said Bey did not mention the Johnston plan, the purchase of Russian arms or the oil companies, but asked that the vote should be taken on the basis of his Government's statement of policy.

5. As had been expected, the Prime Minister obtained a vote of confidence by a handsome majority. All the members of the three parties or *blocs* represented in the coalition gave their support except for a former Minister of the Democratic *bloc* who voted with the Opposition, consisting of the Nationalist and Baath-Socialist Parties together with certain independents. The only Communist Deputy abstained.

6. The debate contained little which throws further light on the new Government's intentions (see my despatch No. 106). In spite of Said Bey's condemnation of Mr. Dulles' proposals as being intended to realise peace with

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Israel, I am still of the opinion that Syria's attitude towards them will be governed very largely by that of Egypt and Iraq. The debate did show, however, that the Baath-Socialists, alone among the political parties, have decided to take a stand in opposition to further discussion of the proposals; but Left-wing disapproval was clear from the beginning and is probably not decisive.

7. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Baghdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jedda, Tel Aviv, Paris and Washington and to the Head of the British Middle East Office.

I have, &c.

F. G. K. GALLAGHER.

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V 1073/1184

No. 12

## MUTUAL DEFENCE PACT BETWEEN EGYPT AND SYRIA

*Mr. Gallagher to Mr. Macmillan. (Received October 31)*(No. 121. Confidential) *Damascus,*  
Sir, *October 20, 1955.*

With reference to my telegram No. 414 of the 22nd of October, I have the honour to inform you that a mutual defence pact between Egypt and Syria was signed in Damascus on the 20th of October. The text of the pact has not yet been made public.

2. As reported in my letter (11917/66/55) of the 18th of October to Mr. Rose, the idea of concluding this pact seems to have been evolved during the meeting of Arab Foreign Ministers in Cairo between the 8th and the 12th of October. The return of the Syrian Prime Minister to Damascus was followed by unconfirmed rumours that such a pact was under consideration; but, in view of the Government's declaration of policy (see my despatch No. 106 of the 21st of September) in which the Prime Minister undertook to renew discussions on the tripartite pact with a view to founding a new pact open to all Arab States, it was generally thought that a bilateral military agreement with Egypt, which would run counter to this policy, was unlikely.

3. In any case, it seemed reasonable to expect that, if such a pact was contemplated, there would be detailed negotiations between the two Governments which would be carried out over a considerable period of time, as happened earlier this year when the Syrian, Egyptian and Saudi Arabian Governments attempted to agree on the proposed tripartite pact. In fact, however, the negotiations were conducted with remarkable speed and secrecy and the pact was signed only six days after the Prime Minister's return from Cairo.

4. Although the text has not been released for publication, an official statement has admitted that the texts appearing in certain newspapers give the general lines of the agreement. It may be useful, therefore, to summarise the principal points as given in *L'Orient*, a French language newspaper published in Beirut:—

(a) The two States will consider any attack directed against one of them to be directed equally against the other.

(b) They will consult each other in the event of a threat to the security of any part of the Arab world.

(c) They agree to set up a Supreme Defence Council consisting of the Prime Ministers, Foreign Ministers and Defence Ministers of the two countries. They will be advised by a Military Council consisting of the two Chiefs of Staff.

(d) They will nominate a Commander-in-Chief who will have under his command in peace as in war the armed forces of the two States. (Other newspaper reports omit "in peace.")

(e) Egypt will contribute 65 per cent. and Syria 35 per cent. of the total of a special fund to finance the construction of military installations approved by the Commander-in-Chief and the two Chiefs of Staff.

(f) The treaty will be valid for five years and is renewable.

5. The reasons for concluding this pact at such short notice are still obscure. From the Syrian standpoint, there are three possibilities:—

(a) The Government are believed to be exploring ways of satisfying the Army's demands for modern equipment. One solution would be to conclude an arms deal with the Communist *bloc*. The Government, however, are reluctant to adopt this policy which would probably be opposed by the Populists and the Constitutional *bloc* and incur the hostility of Turkey and Iraq which, for economic reasons, Syria can ill afford. As a way out of this difficulty, the Government may have decided to try to obtain Communist arms through Egypt as an intermediary, thus enabling them to justify the deal as a purely inter-Arab transaction. There are reports that, as a counterpart, Egypt insisted on the signature of the tripartite pact or some other alliance which would bind Syria to Egypt militarily and

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politically. The press believes that the new bilateral pact has a secret protocol dealing with the supply of arms.

(b) Syria may have realised that the Egyptian arms deal with Czechoslovakia increased the chances of an Israeli attack and that the growing tension on the frontier indicated that Syria might have to bear the brunt. An agreement with Egypt would not only ensure automatic military assistance in the event of war, but would also buttress public morale. Syrian opinion in general is worried about the recent deterioration in Arab-Israel relations and the Chief of Staff, in a recent discussion with the Military Attaché, gave the impression that his mind was obsessed with the idea of an Israeli attack to gain living space. Responsible army officers to whom the Military Attaché has spoken are unhappy about the position of their reserves of all warlike stores, including ammunition, should war break out. They are also highly sceptical about the effectiveness of the Tripartite Declaration of 1950, and take the line that the West are too involved elsewhere to take positive action in the event of a rapid gain of territory by Israel in one of the Arab States. Thus, the reluctance of the present Government to conclude a pact which does not embrace all the Arab States may have been overridden in the interests of national security.

(c) The new agreement may, however, be nothing more than a face-saving device for dropping the tripartite pact and enabling Syria to build up a new form of Arab alliance based on a series of bilateral agreements each of which would be designed to meet the special circumstances of the signatories.

Whatever the correct explanation may be, the bilateral agreement will inevitably mean

some increase in Egyptian influence in Syrian affairs.

6. The agreement has been warmly welcomed by most sections of the press. The Left-wing papers hope that it will lead to the conclusion of a new tripartite pact by the accession of Saudi Arabia. The only dissident voice is the pro-Western *NAS* which points out that the agreement, like the tripartite pact, will split the Arab world.

7. All the political parties in Syria are believed to have pledged their support for the new agreement. They include the Right-wing parties who either opposed, or had doubts about, the tripartite pact and who succeeded in embodying their reservations in the Government's declaration of policy. Their attitude to the bilateral agreement with Egypt is no doubt due to some extent to the absence of the objectionable provisions dealing with economic unity and a common foreign policy included in the draft of the tripartite pact. They hope, by concluding an agreement with Egypt, to put an end to Left-wing clamour for the conclusion of the tripartite pact.

8. It is generally believed that Syria will now attempt to conclude bilateral agreements with other Arab States. The Prime Minister returned two days ago from Saudi Arabia, but the outcome of his visit is not yet known. It is reported this morning, however, that an economic delegation will shortly be leaving for Jeddah. There is also talk of concluding a military alliance with the Lebanon and a commercial agreement with Iraq. It seems probable that the Government hope in this way to strengthen Syria's economy and her defences against Israel while reducing Egyptian influence to a minimum.

9. I am sending copies of this despatch to Her Majesty's Representatives at Amman, Ankara, Bagdad, Beirut, Cairo, Jeddah, Tel Aviv, Paris and Washington and to the Political Representative with the Middle East Forces.

I have, &c.

F. G. K. GALLAGHER  
(*Chargé d'Affaires.*)

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APPENDIX  
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

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No. 13

LEADING PERSONALITIES IN SYRIA

*Sir John Gardener to Sir Anthony Eden. (Received January 24)*

(No. 10. Confidential) *Damascus,*  
Sir, *January 15, 1955.*

With reference to my despatch No. 147 of the 28th of September, 1953, I have the honour to send you herewith my report on the leading personalities in Syria, 1955. This report was compiled after the General Elections in Syria in October 1954 and takes account of the many changes and revisions which became necessary as a result of the fall of General Shishakli's régime and the unstable political situation which succeeded it.

I have, &c.  
J. GARDENER.

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#### 1. A'as, Shakir

Born about 1903 near Qatana. Moslem. Studied economics in America and France and has been connected with various industrial projects in Syria. Counsellor at the Syrian Legation in Paris 1945-46. Prominent member of the Popular Party and editor of the party organ *Es Shaab*, which ceased to publish as a result of the army's *coup* of December 1949. Elected to Constituent Assembly in 1949 as Deputy for Quneitra. Minister of National Economy and Agriculture in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950. Minister of Finance in two successive Governments under Nazim Qudsi (*q.v.*) from September 1950 to 27th March, 1951. Minister of National Economy under Hassan Hakim (*q.v.*) from 9th August to 10th November and Foreign Minister under Ma'ruf Dawalibi (*q.v.*) on 28th November. On 29th November he was imprisoned by General Shishakli after the latter's *coup d'État*. Released in April 1952. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Unsuccessful Populist candidate in 1954 elections.

Was an ardent Nationalist and an active agitator under the Mandate; an opportunist of suspected leftist tendencies.

#### 2. Abdulkarim, Aziz, Colonel

Born in 1908. An Alouite Moslem. Became Inspector of Artillery with the rank of lieutenant-colonel in 1949, Director of Artillery in 1950, Commander of the Northern Region based on Aleppo in 1951 and full colonel and Officer Commanding, 4th Bureau, in 1952. Forcibly retired from the Army in December 1952 for alleged implication in a plot against the régime. December 1953 appointed Mohafez of Rural Damascus. March 1954 reinstated in army and promoted brigadier in April. July 1954 appointed Assistant Deputy Chief of Staff (Administration). He is considered honest, conscientious, and practical, though pigheaded. Dislikes paper work. Reputedly Anglophobe.

#### 3. 'Aidi, Abdul Karim

Born 1903 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Educated in Damascus, but while still a student was sentenced to five years' imprisonment following the Crane Commission incidents and fled to Transjordan, where he met King Ali, whom he accompanied to the Hedjaz. Returned to Damascus in 1927; principal of the Ulmiyah College 1929-39. Fled to Bagdad to escape arrest by the French, but returned in 1941. Kaimakam of Douma 1943-45. Director of Police, Damascus, April 1945 to May 1946, during which period he was on very friendly terms with the officers of the British Military Security Mission and proved very co-operative. Mohafez of Dera' 1946-47. Appointed Mohafez of Hama December 1948. Was a leading member of the League of National Action. He is a close friend of Shukri Quwatly. Appointed Director of Tribal Control in July 1949. Appointed Mohafez of the Euphrates in June 1951. Appointed Head of the Office in Syria for the boycott of Israel early in

1953. Made an Arab League official in 1954 and appointed Head of the General Boycott Office against Israel.

Capable and intelligent with a pleasant personality.

#### 4. Aflaq, Michel

Born about 1910 in Damascus. Christian. Studied at the Sorbonne and contributed to a Parisian Communist-controlled magazine. On his return, he taught history at a secondary school and wrote communistic articles for the press. He formed a group of student followers into the Ba'ath El Arabi Party in 1940, with Salahuddin Bitar (*q.v.*) as his lieutenant. He later said that he thought communism was inapplicable in Moslem countries. He was against Shukri Quwatly (*q.v.*) except when the latter opposed the French mandatory power. He was imprisoned under the Zaim régime, but afterwards, in 1949, he was appointed Minister of Education by Hashim Atassi (*q.v.*). Resigned after three months. He left for a protracted visit to South America in 1950. Returned to Syria but fled to the Lebanon with Akram Hourani (*q.v.*) and Salahuddin Bitar (*q.v.*) after the abortive anti-Shishakli plot at the end of 1952. Returned to Spain with his fellow conspirators in October 1953 with Shishakli's permission. When Ba'ath and Socialist parties amalgamated Aflaq remained one of the leaders, but almost from the beginning difficulties arose between him and Hourani. Being a Christian he is handicapped politically. Did not stand in 1954 elections. He is honest with more intelligence than most fanatics.

#### 5. Ajlani, Mumir

Son of Darwish Ajlani. Born, Damascus 1910. Sunni Moslem. Studied in France, where he graduated as doctor of law. Author of a book on Syrian Constitution. Elected Deputy 1936. At outset of Nationalist régime he, with Seif ed Din Ma'moun, Ahmad Samman and Mohamed Sarraj, organised the "Iron Shirts" (an organisation based on Nazi Brown Shirts) and was one of the commanders until it was taken over by Nizhat Mamluk 1937. Soon after, the movement was suppressed by French, following disorders in Aleppo and Latakia.

Although his age had been amended by Nationalists to enable him to become Deputy (minimum 30), he bitterly opposed Nationalists in Parliament. In 1938 he and Zeki el Khatib were arrested and tried for writing a manifesto attacking Nationalist Government, but were acquitted.

In September 1941 he was appointed head of Sheikh Taj ed Din's secretariat, and when on 17th April, 1942, Cabinet was reshuffled Sheikh Taj made him Minister of newly created Ministry of Youth and Propaganda in the Government of Husni Barazi. Was a member of Jamil Ulshi's Government (January 1943 to March 1943), occupying the same Ministry, the name of which was changed to Ministry of Social Affairs (January 1943). Married on 20th August, 1942, the daughter of Sheikh Taj. Appointed lecturer in Roman law at Damascus University, March 1943. Professor of Law College 1945. Deputy for Damascus 1947. Minister of Education in Jamil Mardam's second Government October 1947. Member of Syrian Delegation to Arab League Conference in Beirut October 1947.

Imprisoned by Zaim for publishing a pro-Hashimite article. Elected as an Independent to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. An advocate of union between Syria and her Hashimite neighbours, Ajlani was arrested in September 1950 together with Lieutenant-Colonel Bahij Kallas on charges of conspiring against the security of the State with the Jordan Government. After trial by a military tribunal

Ajlani was acquitted in January 1951. Minister of Justice in Ma'ruf Dawalibi's (*q.v.*) Government, 28th to 29th November. Imprisoned by General Shishakli. Released in February 1952. Dismissed from the School of Law at Damascus University in March for refusing to take an oath to abstain from politics. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Minister of Education in Sabri Assali's caretaker Government March-June 1954. August 1954 appointed Ambassador at Paris, but did not proceed. Returned as an Independent for Damascus in September 1954 elections. Led small group of Independents who co-operated with Nationalists. Minister of Education in Faris el Khouri's Government, October 1954.

Conceited individual, vacillating and highly emotional yet obstinate. Is considered a good speaker by Arabs.

#### 6. Alexandros III, Tahhan

Born in Damascus in 1869, where he was educated in the Greek Orthodox School. His brilliance and his steadiness led to his being sent to the Ecclesiastical College in Constantinople. In 1894 he returned to Damascus and two years later went to the religious academy in Kiev. Studied for a few years in Moscow. In 1903 he was appointed Bishop of Adana and Tarsus, but was badly received by the population there and resigned in 1906. In 1908 he was appointed Bishop of Tripoli and remained there until 1930, when he was elected Patriarch of Damascus by the Damascus electors but not by other members of the electoral college, who elected Arsanios, Bishop of Latakia. A schism resulted and the three other patriarchs (Alexandria, Constantinople and Jerusalem) sent representatives to conduct an enquiry into the election. They finally gave their opinion in favour of Alexandros. The schism, however, persisted until the death of Arsanios in 1932. Alexandros has been criticised for his weak handling of the Epiphanos revolt in 1935, which resulted in the formation of an independent church in Latakia in 1936. This independent community existed until 1939, when the French High Commissioner threatened to declare it illegal. Since that date Epiphanos and the Patriarch have been reconciled. The Italian attack on Greece in 1940 brought Alexandros into the open as an outspoken supporter of the Greek cause in spite of the presence in Syria of an Italian Armistice Commission and in spite of the pro-Axis leanings of the French Vichy authorities. As he supported the Greeks, so he supported the Allied cause under the same circumstances. The traditional Russian support enjoyed by the Orthodox Church in Syria having ceased in 1917, the Orthodox community under Alexandros has drawn nearer to the Moslem Syrian Government and, on the whole further away from the Latin Christian community which enjoyed the protection of the French Mandatory. Alexandros maintains relations with the Anglican Church both in Jerusalem and in England. When the Government of the U.S.S.R. acknowledged the Russian Orthodox Church in 1941-42 he began a correspondence with the Patriarch Sergei, and attended the election ceremonies in Moscow of the Patriarch in January 1945. In 1950 was given honorary membership of the Theological Faculty at Kiev by the Metropolitan of Leningrad. Alexandros seemed at one stage very susceptible to Soviet blandishments but displeased Moscow by accepting an invitation to attend the St. Paul 19th Centenary celebrations at Athens. Subsequently visited Moscow using his journey to Athens as justification for, and as evidence of, his impartiality. Whilst there, was induced to make statements against the West. Returned with 20,000 dollars and a promise of the same sum annually, of which one instalment has now been paid. This and

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more is being used to reconstruct his residence and to gratify his present passion for building. A further visit to Moscow and Bucharest in 1954 brought him a substantial sum in cash said to be sufficient to complete his building programme. The 50th anniversary of his consecration as a bishop in July 1954, was celebrated with great pomp. The Patriarch received many gifts brought by delegates from all over the world.

#### 7. Amri, Hamid

Born in 1911; from Deraa. Sunni Moslem. Graduated from the School of Law at the Syrian University and afterwards studied in France. He has held the posts of Kaimakam of Kamichlé and Registrar-General in Damascus. In 1952, owing to his support of the régime, he was appointed acting Secretary-General of the Ministry of the Interior in place of Fuad Chebat (*q.v.*). He later became successively Acting Secretary-General of the Prime Minister's office, and, in August 1953, Assistant Secretary-General at the Presidency. When Shishakli was overthrown in February 1954 Amri was transferred to be Secretary to the Cabinet.

#### 8. Antaki, Naim

Born Aleppo 1900. Greek Orthodox. Educated in American University, Beirut. A lawyer, he formerly worked with Maître Louis Zaidé and was at one time Dean of the Order of Barristers at Aleppo. Has visited India. Secretary to the Syrian delegation in Paris for the conclusion of the Franco-Syrian Treaty. On his return he became, in July 1937, Director for Foreign Affairs, but resigned in December 1937, being dissatisfied with the way in which he was ignored by his Moslem colleagues whenever important decisions were to be taken. Took no part in politics from fall of Nationalist Government (1939) until selected as Minister for Provisional Government of Ata Bey Ayoubi, in which he held Ministries for Foreign Affairs and Public Works (March 1943-August 1943). Elected Deputy for Damascus, whither he had officially transferred his domicile, in 1943, but for many months took no active part in politics as a result of temporary loss of eyesight through overwork. Minister of Finance, April 1945 to August, in Faris Khouri's second Government (*q.v.*); member of Syrian delegation to United Nations Conference in San Francisco, April 1945, Minister of Finance and Acting Minister of Public Works in Saadullah Jabri's Government (*q.v.*), September 1945, but resigned December 1945. Minister for Foreign Affairs in Jamil Mardam's First Government, December 1946 until April 1947.

Is lawyer of Middle East Pipe Lines of the Iraq Petroleum Company, and of the Banque de Syrie. Was lawyer of Tapline but was not employed during the Zaim régime because he was said to get on badly with Husni Zaim (*q.v.*) whom he defended unsuccessfully when he was court-martialled in 1941. Successfully helped Middle East Pipe Lines to secure their way leave and refinery conventions in June 1949. Has been member of Syrian delegation at several United Nations Conferences and at many Arab League meetings. Attended Inter-Parliamentary Union Congress in Stockholm in September 1949 and in 1950 as a Syrian delegate. Formerly an ardent Nationalist, his views are now considerably more moderate although he retains his great admiration and friendship for Jamil Mardam. Refused nomination as a member of the Syrian delegation to the United Nations in 1952, ostensibly on grounds of ill-health, but in fact because he does not wish to be involved with the present régime.

Very well educated, a tremendous worker and straightforward and sincere. Well disposed towards the British. Speaks excellent English and French.

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**9. Aphram I, Mar Ignatius**

Syrian Orthodox (Jacobite) Patriarch of Antioch. Born 1884 in Mosul. Educated by the Dominicans at Mosul and received into the Roman Catholic Church. Subsequently reverted to his original Church and was ordained in it. Became Patriarch with residence at Homs 1932. His community extends over the Middle East and India (whence he draws considerable funds). Very aware of his own importance and that of his Church. Like most Levant churchmen, mingles politics with religion.

**10. Armanazi, Najib**

Born about 1900. From Hama. Sunni Moslem. Docteur en Droit ("à titre d'étranger") of Paris. Was private secretary to President Abed, and so anathema to Taj ed Din, who persuaded de Martel to oblige Abed to get rid of him. Appointed private secretary to President Atassi in 1937. On the resignation of President Atassi (July 1939) remained unemployed until appointed Secretary-General to President Quwatli, August 1943. Is brother-in-law of Jamil Mardam and his wife is General Shishakli's cousin. Appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Great Britain, Poland and Czechoslovakia, January 1945. Syrian representative on Preliminary Committee for United Nations Organisation and member of Syrian delegation to United Nations Organisation meeting in London, November 1945; appointed Minister to Sweden September 1947. He is not generally considered to have made a success of his mission in London and was recalled in June 1949. Appointed Syrian Minister to India in March 1950. Appointed Minister to Turkey in March 1952. He evidently did not please his masters in Damascus and was relieved of his post in March 1953. Reinstated in Foreign Service following Shishakli's fall and appointed Syrian Ambassador at Cairo in April 1954. Since then he has frequently been a Syrian delegate to Arab League meetings.

**11. Asaf, Amin Abu, Brigadier**

A Druze born in 1910 at Soueida. In 1949 he was promoted lieutenant-colonel and in 1951 given command of the 1st Brigade on the Israeli Front. In June 1952 he relinquished command of the 1st Brigade at Quneitra and was appointed Commander of the 5th Liwa at Deir-az-Zor. July 1954 promoted brigadier and appointed to command armoured brigade at Qatana. He has had twenty-two years' continuous service. Was not trusted by General Shishakli who was afraid to get rid of him because of his large Druze following in the Syrian army.

He played a leading part in three *coups d'Etat*—Zaim's in March 1949; Hinnawi's in August 1949 and Shishakli's in December 1949.

He is an unprincipled opportunist and a thug with little personality.

**12. Assali, Sabri**

Born Damascus 1901. Sunni Moslem. Took law degree in University of Damascus.

Being of Nationalist outlook, joined Nationalist Youth Movement and became its leader in 1940. Active in formation and control of Iron Shirts Movement until 1937, when it was disbanded. Joined up with Shukri Quwatli's Istiklal Party and became his principal lieutenant in 1940. Under Vichy régime was anti-Allied, and organised in May 1941 Committee for Defence of Iraq (*i.e.*, pro-Rashid Ali). Arrested by Allies in February 1941 and interned at Rashaya. Released March 1943, elected Deputy for Damascus that year. Was a leading member of the League of National Action, which exercised considerable influence in Damascus and on which the President of the Republic placed considerable reliance.

Minister of Interior in Faris Khouri's second Government (*q.v.*) April to August 1945. Minister of Justice in Faris Khouri's third Government August–September 1945. Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of Education in Saadullah Jabri's second Government, September 1945 to April 1946. Minister of Interior and Minister of Health in Saadullah Jabri's third Government, April–December 1946. As Minister of Interior showed himself ready to take strong action to prevent disorders and to suppress anti-Government activity. Elected deputy for Damascus in 1947. Secretary-General of the National Party. Pretended to co-operate with the late Husni Zaim in 1949 but in reality worked against him. Lay low towards the end of Zaim's régime but after Zaim's fall came out into the open again as an active worker for the National Party. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953).

After Shishakli's fall in 1954 Assali became Prime Minister of the temporary coalition Cabinet which was to restore constitutional life and carry out elections. His Cabinet fell in June 1954 as a result of internal dissension and having made little attempt to carry out elections. Was elected for Damascus September 1954.

He is unmarried, and drinks and gambles heavily. Nevertheless, he is one of the stronger characters in Syrian politics and not ill-disposed to the West.

**13. Atassi, Adnan**

Born Homs about 1905. Sunni Moslem. Son of Hashem Atassi (*q.v.*). Lawyer. During Nationalist Government was appointed Syrian Vice-Consul and attached for instruction to French Consulate, Istanbul. Married a Turkish lady. Elected Deputy for Homs 1943 and again 1947, and President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Syrian Chamber. Minister Plenipotentiary to France and Belgium, January 1945 to March 1946. Minister of Justice and Public Works in Jamil Mardam's First Government, December 1946 to June 1947. Represented Syrian Chamber of Deputies at the International Parliamentary Conference at Geneva, September 1945. At one time suspected of pro-Axis activities and was known to be in frequent contact with the Grand Mufti during the latter's residence at Versailles. A prominent member of the Parliamentary Constitutional Party. He was one of the leading Deputies in opposition to Shukri Quwatli's régime. Sent as Minister to Paris in 1949 and headed Syrian Delegation to Lausanne talks with Israel under auspices of Palestine Conciliation Commission in the same year.

Was relieved of his post in the autumn of 1952. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953).

After fall of Shishakli, his father resumed the office of President of the Republic from which he had previously resigned in protest against the military régime. This gave Adnan an important position, for he has much influence with his father and has even attended Cabinet meetings. Elected for Homs in 1954.

Intelligent and well educated. Relatively pro-Western. Generally considered as a possible Minister for Foreign Affairs.

**14. Atassi Faidi**

Born about 1905, Homs. Moslem. Son of former Mufti of Homs and cousin of Hashem al Atassi (*q.v.*). Educated in France (law). Had no political career, but was Chief of Municipality of Homs. Became Minister of Education in the Hassam al Hakim Government on its formation in September 1941, but resigned early in March 1942 in pique. Chosen to be Minister of Justice, Education, Social Affairs in Provisional Government at Ata Bey Ayoubi (March 1943–August 1943).

Returned to his job as head of the Municipality, Homs, until 1946, when he resigned. Deputy for Homs, 1947.

Invited by Husni Zaim to form a Government following *coup d'Etat* of March 1949 but refused to take office as Minister of Education when his attempts failed. Accepted post of Minister of National Economy in Hashim Atassi's Cabinet of August 1949. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as a member of the Popular Party. Minister of Justice in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. Resigned in May 1950. Chairman of Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies 1950–51. Minister of Interior under Nazim Qudsi (*q.v.*), 23rd to 27th March, and Minister for Foreign Affairs under Hassan Hakim (*q.v.*), 9th August to 10th November, 1951. In the latter capacity he made a speech in Parliament attacking the Four-Power Middle East Defence proposals and resigned after quarrelling with the Prime Minister on this issue, thereby precipitating the fall of the Government. Owns a newspaper, *El Suri El Jedid* (The New Syrian), which is generally anti-British in tone. It was the only paper to attack Shishakli openly during his régime. In this paper he opposed General Shishakli's new Constitution and the latter's "election" as President (July 1953). Minister for Foreign Affairs in Sabri Assali's coalition Cabinet, March–June 1954. Returned as a Populist Deputy for Homs in September 1954 elections. Minister for Foreign Affairs in Faris el-Khouri's Cabinet formed in October 1954.

Over-confident and supple. Overprone of his education. He has deep convictions but is a determined politician. He is relatively pro-Western and amenable to reason, but vacillating.

**15. Atassi, Hashim**

Born about 1865 in Homs. Moslem. Good landed family. Prime Minister and President of the Constituent Assembly under Feisal, and President of the Constituent Assembly of 1928. Went to Mecca to be one of the three mediators in conflict between Imam Yahya and Ibn Saud. Succeeded Hanano as leader of the Syrian Nationalist bloc in January 1936. Led the Syrian delegation that went to Paris in March 1936 to negotiate a Franco-Syrian treaty after the disturbances of January–March 1936. With the Syrian delegation in Paris his moderating and soothing influence was of great assistance to the successful conclusion of the treaty negotiations. Elected President of the Syrian Republic, 21st December, 1936. On his election as President he resigned the leadership of the Nationalist Party, which was taken over by Shukri Quwatli. His influence over the party grew less, however, as the Nationalist Government took the bit more firmly between its teeth. Resigned with the fall of the Nationalist Government on 7th July, 1939, and retired to his property at Homs, where he had built himself a pleasant villa during his tenure of office. Had conversations with General Dentz about resuming office in March 1941 and with General Catroux in September 1941 and again in March 1943, but on each occasion without result. Did not participate in 1943 elections and did not stand for the presidency. He began to be regarded as a respectable old man of moderate opinions, but somewhat *passé*. During the Cabinet crisis of December 1948 was invited but failed to form a Government. After the *coup d'Etat* by the late Colonel Hinnawi of 14th August, 1949, formed a provisional coalition Cabinet. Elected temporary Head of State by the Constituent Assembly in December 1949, pending the drawing up of a new Constitution. Elected President of the Republic on 5th September, 1950, the day when the new Constitution was formally adopted and the Constituent Assembly became the Chamber of Deputies. Retired to his property at

Homs after General Shishakli's *coup d'Etat* of 29th November 1951. Associated himself with opposition to draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Resumed the office of President of the Republic after Shishakli's fall, March 1954. During Cabinet crisis of October 1954 allowed it to be known that he might resign if politicians did not show a greater sense of responsibility.

During the 1936 Franco-Syrian Treaty talks he showed himself to be a Nationalist who could temper courage with discretion. After becoming President he continued to show a dignified tact and restraint. However, he has always been a figure-head rather than a leader.

**16. Atrash, Amir Hassan**

Born about 1908. Head of the House of Aeré, the leading house of the Atrash family. Was Mohafiz of Jebel Druse until he was appointed Minister of Defence in Husni Barazi's Government (April 1942 to January 1943), taking the place occupied by his uncle, Abdul Ghaffar Pasha, until the old man's death in March 1942. Was again Minister of Defence in Jamil Ulshi's Government (January 1943 to March 1943). Deputy for Soueida 1943 and president of Defence Committee of Syrian Chamber, but placed on reserve in December 1947. Re-appointed Mohafiz of Jebel Druse (April 1943) and resigned from the Chamber. The full integration of Jebel Druse in the Syrian Republic in 1945 was largely due to his influence. In May 1945 he sponsored the mutiny of the Groupement Druse against their French officers and *n.c.o.s.* to whom he gave sanctuary in his house. He considers that the Syrian Government are not sufficiently appreciative of the "leading rôle" the Druse have played both in 1925 and 1945 against the French. Amir Hassan is a typical Druse. Despite his pretence of being pro-British, he did nothing to help the Allies during the Syrian campaign; and nothing to hinder. He can, however, sometimes be "jollied" into favourable action. Flirted with the Nationalists, with the French and with King Abdullah. His following in the Jebel Druse was split by Shukri Quwatli in 1948 and his control is no longer absolute. Was imprisoned by General Shishakli in January 1954, but was released a few weeks later when Shishakli fell. Minister of Agriculture in Sabri Assali's coalition Cabinet March–June 1954. Returned for Soueida in 1954 elections.

He is ill-educated, stubborn, ambitious and avaricious.

**17. Atrash, Soltan Bin Hamud Pasha**

Born about 1875 in the Jebel Druse. (Soltan is a name, not a title.) Family originally from Rashaya, migrated to Jebel Druse in 1860's and became paramount Druse family there. Soltan is the head of the Kraiye house, which is junior to the Aeré house, headed by Emir Hassan (*q.v.*). Under the Turks, Soltan adopted wary tactics and avoided a conflict. In 1925–26 took a leading part in the Druse revolt and became a centre round which the various insurgent leaders moved. When the revolt was crushed Soltan Pasha fled to Transjordan with his closest adviser, the Christian Oqla Qutami. There he found sanctuary, although condemned to death in absence by French-court-martial. In 1937 returned to the Jebel but took no active part in politics, leaving Emir Hassan to dominate the Jebel. He retired to Kraiye, content to live on his past glory, which remains considerable. During the campaign of 1941 took no part. In March 1942, after the death of Abdul Ghaffar Pasha el Atrash, at that time Minister of National Defence, was offered the Ministry of Defence, but refused it.



Soltan Pasha and Oqla Qutami were awarded pensions for life by the Syrian Government as patriots and heroes of 1925-26 revolt.

During the past few years he has on several occasions openly showed his dissatisfaction with the Damascus Government on the grounds that insufficient deference is paid to him and his past record. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Central figure in the unintended Druse revolt against Shishakli which occurred January-February 1954 as a result of his son's anti-Shishakli activities. After some fighting, he fled to Jordan where he was given refuge. After Shishakli's fall a few weeks later, he returned to Syria and was acclaimed as a hero.

Ill-educated, of small intelligence and with a reputation for meanness, he is crafty, and managed to inspire in the insurgents of 1925 confidence in his leadership. He remains the most important Druse. Is inclined to be pro-British and was anti-French. He feels, however, that the British let him down, as they told him not to intrigue against the Fighting French (and he abstained from doing so), but allowed the French to intrigue against him, undermining his influence in the Jebel Druse.

#### 18. Ayesha, Mohammad el- Haj

Born in 1890 in Deir ez Zor, where he is a rich landowner. Educated at the Secondary School there. Moslem.

Started his active [career] as Adviser to the Deir ez Zor Administrative Council and Vice-President of the Chamber of Commerce there. Was for fifteen years member of the Awkaf Council of the Euphrates Mohafazat. Deputy for Deir ez Zor in 1936, 1943, 1947, 1949 and 1954. Minister of National Economy in three successive Governments, from September 1949 to March 1953. Minister of State and Acting Minister of Agriculture in the fourth Government formed by Jamil Mardam in August 1948. Was Acting Speaker during the absence of Faris Khouri from 1947 to August 1948.

Has now become a wealthy merchant. Is a staunch member of the Nationalist Party. Friendly towards Britain. Speaks only Arabic.

#### 19. Azm, Abdurrahman al-

Born 1916 at Hama, Moslem. Son of a wealthy landowner. Educated at the American University of Beirut he is a graduate of the Jesuit School of Law, Beirut. Related to the family of Khalid al Azm. Elected to Parliament in 1947 and to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949, as an Independent. Appointed Minister of Finance in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. A bitter enemy of Akram Hourani. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. Reappointed Minister of Finance under Khalid al Azm (q.v.), 27th March to 30th July, 1951, and again under Ma'rif Dawalibi (q.v.), 28th to 29th November, 1951. Imprisoned by General Shishakli and released in April 1952. Appointed Minister of Finance in Sabri Assali's coalition Cabinet, March-June 1954. Was heavily defeated in Hama at 1954 elections by Akram Hourani (q.v.) and other Ba'ath Socialists.

Serious-minded, intelligent and a hard worker.

#### 20. Azm, Khalid el

Born about 1900 in Damascus. Moslem. Son of Mohamed Pasha al Azm. Did not at first take an active part in politics, except an occasional intervention in agricultural matters. Member of the Municipal Council. Managing director of the National Cement Factory. Appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Justice in the Bukhari Cabinet, March to May 1939.

Under the influence of the Italian Disarmament Commission, was appointed by Vichy French (General Dentz) on 2nd April, 1941, as "Chef d'Etat" and Minister of Interior. His régime lasted until September 1941, when it was replaced by "Independent" Syrian Government with Shaikh Taj ed Din as President. During Syrian campaign he collaborated closely with Vichy French to preserve order in Damascus. During whole period of office he showed himself to be under the influence of the Nationalists—especially of Shukri Quwatli. Deputy for Damascus 1943 and Minister of Finance in Saadullah Jabri's Government (August 1943-October 1944). Minister of Finance and Ravitaillement in Faris Khouri's first Government October 1944 to April 1945. Minister of Finance and Defence in Faris Khouri's third Government August to September 1945. Minister of National Economy and Justice in Saadullah Jabri's third Government, April 1946. Was acting Prime Minister on several occasions and resigned in December 1946. Appointed Minister to France, Belgium and Switzerland, May 1947. Syrian representative on Franco-Levant States financial negotiations December to February 1946-47.

Was recalled to Syria by Shukri Quwatli in November 1948 to help solve the Cabinet crisis which followed the resignation of Jamil Mardam and took office as Prime Minister. Under his Government, which lasted till March 1949, a forward economic policy was pursued. He was arrested by Husni Zaim but quickly released. After the second *coup d'Etat* of August 1949, in which Zaim was executed, he became Minister of Finance.

Became Prime Minister in December 1949, shortly after the "disciplinary action" taken by General Adib Shishakli against Sami Hinnawi and Asad Tallas. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. Formed Cabinet of Independents on 27th March, 1951; resigned 30th July. Remained aloof during remainder of General Shishakli's régime. Headed the poll at Damascus in the September 1954 elections and was generally recognised as a contender for the Presidency of the Republic when it should become vacant. Public animosity between him and Quwatli and vague left-wing views probably gained him a good deal of popularity. He was almost certainly also helped by French money for which he was much criticised. Failed to form a Government in October 1954 as a result of Populist refusal to share in responsibility. He led a large *blocc* of Independents into Opposition in a loose alliance with the Ba'ath-Socialists.

A rich landowner, very pompous, conceited and overbearing. A bit of a bully, but like all bullies, if stood up to, caves in. He is intelligent, well-educated, and more widely read and has wider interests than most of his compatriots. Can be very obstinate and stuffy, however. Has ambitions to become President of the Republic, but might be handicapped in this by his present wife, who was formerly a cabaret dancer. Suspected at one time of pro-German sympathies, but probably incorrectly. His former readiness to co-operate with the Western Powers is now in doubt.

#### 21. Babil, Nassuh

Born Damascus about 1905, of obscure parentage. Sunni Moslem. Arrested with Ajlani (q.v.) in 1938 for his support of Shahbandar against Mardam. Remained supporter of Dr. Shahbandar until latter was assassinated in July 1940, when he and Fuad Qodmani became leaders of Shahbandar Party. He and his party failed in 1943 elections and the party disintegrated. He is proprietor of the Damascus paper *Al Ayyam* and president of the Press Syndicate. Came under suspicion of the Syrian Government of being in touch with the French regarding the setting up of a quisling Government during the bombardment of Damascus in May 1945. Visited

the United Kingdom in December 1946. Generally favourable to Shishakli's Arab Liberation Movement.

A mediocre individual and opportunist who, however, has the respect of a large section of the Syrian press.

#### 22. Barazi, Husni

Born about 1882. In Hama. Sunni Moslem. Son of Suleiman Agha Barazi, a rich landed Kurdish family of Hama. Minister of the Interior under Damad, 1926. Deported on suspicion of assisting rebels in July 1926. Member of Constituent Assembly, 1928. Opposed by Nationalists in elections of 1932 and was not elected. He was, however, appointed Minister of Education in Taj ed Din's Government in March 1934, and resigned with Shaikh Taj in February 1936. Appointed Mohafiz of Alexandretta in January 1937, he sought to prove his attachment to his new Nationalist masters by intriguing with the Arab parties in the Sanjak against the Turks and the Mandatory, but was ejected in November 1937. Appointed Mohafiz of Damascus in March 1942. On fall of Hassan el Hakim Government (April 1942) was appointed by Shaikh Taj ed Din President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of the Interior. Succeeded Faiz Khouri as President of the Commission Supérieure of the Wheat Office, in which capacity he promised to secure large quantities of wheat, but did not succeed. Quarrelled with Shaikh Taj ed Din, posing as Syrian patriot, thinking he had the support of his colleagues. Matters came to a head in January 1943, when all his colleagues resigned and he was obliged to retire.

During the Cabinet crisis of November 1948 endeavoured to return to politics as a virtual dictator. Was appointed by Husni Zaim for a short time in 1949 to be Mohafez of Aleppo and Deputy Military Governor of Syria and ran his district autocratically but well. Resigned owing to rivalry with Zaim, whom he thought of challenging for the presidency. Was later imprisoned by Zaim for a short time and might have been executed had Zaim not preceded him.

Until he assumed office was heavily in debt. Before the visit to Syria of the Anglo-American Commission of Enquiry on Palestine in 1946 he volunteered to His Majesty's Consul, Damascus, to testify before the Commission in favour of the Jews. Professes to be well disposed towards Britain. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as an Independent. A bitter enemy of Akram Hourani (q.v.). Fundamentally unreliable, he has since the end of 1949 posed as the bitter opponent of the Army's interference in Syrian politics but this did not prevent him from remaining on good terms with the military clique for a time. Imprisoned by General Shishakli after his *coup d'Etat* of 29th November. Released March 1952. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). In 1954 founded, together with Nazir Fanza, the paper *An Nas*, for which he writes frequently in a singularly independent way. He has openly advocated some sort of agreement with the Western Powers and has delivered some effective attacks against communism. He was heavily defeated at Hama in the 1954 elections by Akram Hourani and other Ba'ath-Socialists.

A man of some strength of character, but devoid of morals. A witty and effective speaker. Intriguer and accused in the past of trafficking in hashish.

#### 23. Barmada, Rashad

Born about 1910. Moslem. Member of a leading Aleppo family. Deputy in 1947 but failed in the elections for the Constituent Assembly in 1949. A prominent lawyer and now President of the Aleppo

Lawyers' Syndicate. One of the original members of the Popular Party. Minister of Interior in the Cabinet formed by Nazim Qudsi on 4th June, 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951. Minister of Interior again under Hassan Hakim (q.v.), August to November 1951. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Returned for Aleppo in 1954 elections. Appointed Minister of Defence in Faris el Khouri's Cabinet, October 1954.

Unimpressive.

#### 24. Basmaji, Said

Born about 1905. Of an undistinguished Aleppo family. Sunni Moslem. Educated at a secondary school. He has spent most of his life working for the Aleppo municipality and has never shown great ability. He was connected with Dr. Rifa'i's (q.v.) Arab Nationalist Party in 1940 and was interned by the British in 1941. Joined General Shishakli's Arab Liberation Movement and was made head of the Aleppo branch. Also, in 1952, appointed president of the Municipal Council. Not popular in Aleppo.

#### 25. Bikdash, Khalid

Born about 1910 in Damascus, of Kurdish origin of a family named Kutrash, Sunni Moslem. Educated in Damascus, where he studied philosophy. Became secretary of Communist Party in Damascus, 1928. The Communist Party was persecuted by the French and in 1934, following the distribution of Communist leaflets, was suppressed, Bikdash being condemned to several years' imprisonment. He escaped to the U.S.S.R., where he attended the Oriental School of Propaganda. He claims that, while in the U.S.S.R. he met Stalin. In 1936 went to Paris and obtained a special amnesty through the Syrian delegation which was negotiating the Franco-Syrian Treaty. Returned to Syria in January 1937 and resumed leadership of the Communist Party. Again went into hiding in Damascus at the outbreak of war when Communist Party was suppressed, remaining there until Germany attacked Russia (June 1941). After attempts to reach an understanding with Shukri Quwatli (q.v.) by which he should be included on the latter's electoral list in 1943, Bikdash stood as an independent candidate and failed. He failed also in the 1947 elections. Thereupon he devoted his energies to organising the activities of the Communist Party, and is known to have been in touch with members of the Soviet Legation. Stated to be owner of a Communist paper in Beirut. Tried to stand as an Independent candidate for the Constituent Assembly in November 1949, but his application was refused. He spent a considerable period in the U.S.S.R. but returned to Syria and the Lebanon in the autumn of 1953. He remained in hiding but reorganised the Communist Party and inspired it with a new vigour. The results were seen in the serious Communist disturbances which took place in Damascus at the time of Shishakli's overthrow and in the speedy and effective way in which the Communists took advantage of the greater freedom accorded them under the parliamentary régime. Stood as a "National Union" candidate for Damascus in the 1954 elections and was brilliantly successful, becoming the first avowed Communist to enter Parliament. Was elected to the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber.

Popular among the working classes and a good speaker. Said to receive substantial subsidies from Russia. Speaks Arabic, Kurdish, Russian, French. Ambitious and prepared to make trouble. Married Wissal Farha, schoolteacher and a Communist, in 1951. A strong capable leader who is the driving force of communism in the Levant. Has influence with his fellow Kurds. A thoroughly dangerous man who is an opportunist as well as a convinced Communist. An effective speaker.



**26. Bitar Salahuddin**

Born 1912 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Unmarried. Graduated in law at the Sorbonne, Paris. On his return to Syria in 1935 he worked for seven years as a teacher. During that time he acted as lieutenant to Michel Aflaq (q.v.) in building up the Ba'ath el Arabi Party, of which he is still secretary-general. Once called himself a Communist but claims to have disavowed Marxism on the grounds that it is too materialistic. Suspected of being implicated in plotting with army officers against General Shishakli at the end of 1952 and took refuge in the Lebanon with Akram Hourani (q.v.) early in January 1953, but together with Hourani and Aflaq was permitted to return in October 1953. Is now perhaps more important than Aflaq but less so than Hourani in the amalgamated Ba'ath-Socialist Party. Returned for Damascus in the 1954 elections at the bottom of the poll.

Xenophobic but probably not fanatic. Speaks French.

**27. Buzo, Ali**

Born in Damascus in 1916. Moslem. Kurd. Educated at the Tajhiz School and obtained his law degree at the Syrian University. Started his career as a practising lawyer. Co-operated with Dr. Abdul Rahman Shahbandar and led students' risings against the French Mandatory Power. During one particular year, he went to prison ten times. Helped to form the Liberal Party which was later transformed into the Populist Party, of which he is now Secretary-General. During the Husni Zaim régime declined appointment as Syrian Minister to Iraq. Together with Akram Hourani was appointed Political Adviser to Husni Zaim and was a member of the Constituent Assembly formed by Zaim which drafted the Syrian Constitution. Minister of Agriculture in the second Nazim Qudsi Government and remained as such until March 1951. Known for his stubbornness. Deputy for Damascus October 1954 in which month he was appointed Minister of Justice in Faris el Khouri's Government.

Rather an elusive personality who is likely to follow the star of self-interest wherever it may lead. Stands on the left-wing of the Populist Party and has no particular sympathy with the West.

**28. Chatila, Khalid, Dr.**

Born about 1910 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Secondary education in Syria. Later studied and obtained doctorate in philosophy from Paris as a result of a scholarship provided by French authorities. On returning to Syria worked in Ministry of Education.

Married a relative of Khalid al Azm (q.v.) in 1949, through whose influence he was appointed as counsellor at Syrian Legation in Paris.

Appointed Secretary-General of the Presidency by Mushsin Barazi after Zaim's 1949 *coup d'Etat*. Appointed Minister to Spain in February 1953. Appointed Inspector-General of Diplomatic and Consular Missions, January 1954. When Hashim Atassi returned to the presidency of the republic after the fall of Shishakli, Chatila was appointed Secretary-General of the Presidency.

Friendly, but unimpressive.

**29. Chebat, Anis**

Born 1908 in Damascus. Greek Orthodox. Younger brother of Fuad Chebat (q.v.). Educated at the Orthodox and Lazarist Schools in Damascus, and later obtained a degree in Civil Engineering at the Beirut Engineering College after which he entered Government Service.

His first appointment in 1929 was with the technical office of the Public Works Department at Damascus. He was promoted in 1936 to be chief

of the office, a position which he held until 1944. He was then appointed Chief Engineer for the Southern area, and in 1949 promoted to Director of Communications in the Ministry of Public Works and Communications, and also Director of the Department of Concessionary Companies.

A friendly and capable civil servant. Speaks fluent French and fairly good English.

**30. Chebat, Fuad**

Born 1907 in Damascus. Brother of Anis Chebat (q.v.). He and his brother owe much of their success to hard and diligent work and the influence and support of the Orthodox Patriarchate with the French Mandatory Government. Fuad Chebat took a Doctorate of Law at a French University and later became a Professor of Law at the Syrian University. He first entered Government service in 1931 and was employed in the Prime Minister's office, Accounts Department; he was also an advisory member of the Council of State.

Has published four books on law and administration and drafted the Syrian Nationality Law. He is a prominent member of the Greek Orthodox Community and is also a member of the Church Council. Visited England under British Council auspices 1951. Acting Minister of the Interior after General Shishakli's *coup d'Etat* of 29th November, 1951, reverting to Acting Secretary-General on formation of Government on 9th June, 1952. Later superseded by a supporter of the régime, and became Administrator and Professor of Constitutional Law at the University.

Efficient and respected. Friendly to Britain.

**31. Daham al Hadi, Shaikh**

Born 1895. Bedouin chief and head of the Shammar Khrossa. Disputes the leadership of all the Shammar of Syria with his cousin, Meizar Abdul Muhisen, who actually heads the Shammar confederation. Also claims hereditary leadership of the Iraqi Shammar, from which he was evicted by the British. He is therefore bitterly jealous of Sheikh Sfook and continually contrives to undermine his position. Appointed Deputy of the Jezirah tribes in 1936. Exiled in 1942 for obstructing road constructions and wheat purchase. In spite of his being in exile, was elected Deputy in 1943 for Jezirah tribes and in 1947; returned to Syria 1944. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Said to be sympathetic to Popular Party. Elected as a tribal deputy in 1954 elections.

A proud and truculent sheikh, ignorant of his limitations and of world conditions, but is generous and of considerable charm.

**32. Dandashi, Ali Abdul Karim**

Born 1905 at Tel Kalakh. Member of the Danatch clan. A Sunni Moslem. Studied at the Islamic College in Beirut till 1928. Joined the scout movement in 1923 and has remained associated with it. In 1937 he took a group of Syrian scouts to the jamboree in Holland, travelling by way of the Balkans, Austria and Germany, returning through France and Italy. On this occasion he stayed for some time in Berlin and Potsdam, where he associated with Syrians in Germany, notably one of the Dalati brothers, who are associated with him in the scout movement. From 1937 has devoted most of his time to scouting and was elected Chief Scout in November 1941. Is associated with the League of National Action, which was founded by his cousin and of which his colleague in the scout movement, Dr. Rushdi Jabi (q.v.), is leading member. His arrest was ordered by the French in February 1942, but the order was cancelled at the end of March, and, shortly after, he paraded at the head of the scouts at the review of the Syrian gendarmerie.

Dandashi played an important part in the dispute between the scout movement and the Ministry of Youth and Propaganda under Munir Ajlani (q.v.), opposing Government control of the scout movement. After the Allied occupation showed himself willing to co-operate and took part with his scouts in passive defence exercises. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as a member of the Popular Party. Returned as an Independent for Tel Kalakh in the 1954 elections.

Energetic and a disciplinarian.

**33. Daoudi, Adib**

Born about 1920 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. An ambitious young man who was formerly the local correspondent for *Al Misri* and is now Syrian Delegate to the Advisory Commission of U.N.R.W.A., and the head of the Syrian Palestine Arab Refugee Institution. He was a delegate at the 1952, 1953 and 1954 Sessions of the United Nations General Assembly.

Speaks English and French and is outwardly friendly. Probably co-operative only as far as his personal interests allow.

**34. Dawalibi, Ma'raf**

Born 1907 in Aleppo. Moslem. A lawyer. A graduate of the Syrian University, he also holds a Paris University Doctorate of Law. From 1936 to 1938 he was a member of the National Party and was active in both Aleppo and Damascus. During the war was in France at the time of the German occupation and was in close touch with the ex-Mufti Haj Amin Hussaini, Rushid Ali al Keilani and the other pro-German Arabs. Collaborated with the Vichy Government. Helped the ex-Mufti to escape from France in 1946. Elected to Parliament in 1947, he left the National Party and joined the Popular Party in 1948. Member of the Moslem Brotherhood. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Appointed Minister of National Economy in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th December, 1949. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950.

While in Cairo in April, 1950, made a statement indicating that the Arabs would prefer to become a Soviet Republic rather than be judaized as a result of American pressure. This statement caused something of a sensation and was the signal for a noisy demand in Syria, chiefly by the Moslem Brotherhood, for a rapprochement with the Soviet Union. Although the statement did him harm in responsible Syrian circles it boosted his popularity among the masses. Minister of National Economy under Nazim Qudsi (q.v.), 23rd to 27th March, 1951. After the fall of Hassan Hakim's (q.v.) Government on 10th November he managed to form a Government, at the second attempt, on 28th November, but on 29th November its members were imprisoned by General Shishakli. Released in April 1952, but later taken into custody again. Refused to take the oath of non-participation in politics as a civil servant (lecturer at Syrian University) and was accordingly dismissed in May 1952. Released from prison by General Shishakli as an act of clemency in June 1953. After fall of Shishakli was restored to his position in the university and was appointed Minister of Defence in Sabri Assali's coalition Cabinet March-June 1954 which fell partly as a result of the bad relations between Dawalibi and the army. Returned at the head of the poll for Aleppo as a Populist in the 1954 elections.

Popular and a fair speaker. Is reputed to have Left-wing tendencies and ambitions to become President of the Republic.

**35. Diab, Munir**

Born about 1910. Sunni Moslem. A Damascene. A member of a family well known in Syrian commerce and whose primary interests are in the local

textile industry. Appointed Minister of National Economy on 9th June, 1952. Resigned on formation of new Government in July 1953.

Speaks German and very little French. Not at all impressive.

**36. Ghazzi, Said**

Born in Damascus about 1898. Moslem. Educated at Turkish schools in Damascus and Constantinople during the Ottoman régime and obtained his law degree at the Syrian University in 1920. He is a practising lawyer when not holding an official appointment. Appointed Deputy in the Constituent Assembly in 1928, and Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of Finance in 1936; Secretary-General of the Ministry of National Economy in 1938; Director of Posts and Telegraphs; Deputy in 1943; Minister of Justice and Acting Minister of Finance in 1945; Minister of Finance in 1947, then Minister for National Economy and Health.

Belonged to the Nationalist Bloc Party from 1928 till 1936, when he disagreed with its leaders and became an Independent. Prime Minister and Minister for Defence in the caretaker Government he formed in June 1954 to carry out elections. Elected Deputy for Damascus in October 1954.

He enjoys a reputation for honesty and impartiality among all the political parties and this was enhanced by the way in which the general election was conducted in September 1954. He is, however, inclined to be weak and during his tenure of office delegated most of his functions as Minister of Defence to the Chief of Staff as the line of least resistance. Friendly, helpful and pro-Western.

**37. Haffar, Lutfi**

Born Damascus 1888 of a family of well-established merchants. Sunni Moslem. Minister of Public Works under the Damad, 1926, and deported for Nationalist sympathies some months later. Member of the Constituent Assembly, 1928. Accepted post as administrator of Ain Fijeh waterworks, 1931. Deputy in 1932 and again in 1936 when he was elected vice-president of the Chamber of Deputies. Minister of Finance in the second Jamil Mardam Cabinet (July 1937 to February 1939). Prime Minister, 23rd February to 14th March, 1939. Implicated in the murder of Dr. Shabandar in July 1940, and fled to Bagdad. Returned to Syria after the charge against him had been dropped and the Government of Directors replaced by the moderate Nationalist Government of Khaled Bey el Azm (q.v.) in April 1941. Deputy for Damascus 1943 and again in 1947 and Minister of Interior in Saadullah Jabri's Government (August 1943-October 1944), but resented the latter's interference in his Department. Minister of Interior in Faris Khouri's third Government, August-September 1945. Minister of Interior in Saadullah Jabri's second Government, September 1945 to April 1946. Although practically illiterate is interested in the newspaper *Al Inshaa*, which is nominally owned and directed by his cousin, Wajih el Haffar.

Not an extreme Nationalist, but has a lengthy record of political activity in connexion with Palestine—assisted Nebih el Azmi to organise the Arab Conference at Bludan in 1935 and was appointed chairman of the Syrian Committee for the Defence of Palestine. Opposed the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Not a strong personality though he was an important member of the Nationalist bloc and has been president of the Damascus branch of the National Party since 1948. A good second fiddler. Suffers from heart trouble, and is now politically inactive.



**38. Hajjo, Agha Hassan**

Born about 1898 near Mardine, Turkey. Head of Haverkan tribe of Kurds which moved into Syria about 1922. No specific education, but reads and writes Kurdish, Arabic and Turkish. With his late father took prominent part in Separatist Movement in the Jezirah. Resides at Hassetché. Was pro-Ally and co-operative during the war; elected Deputy for Kamishli 1943 and in 1947, but did not enjoy the confidence of the National Party owing to his former connexion with the French.

**39. Hakim, Hassan**

Born Damascus about 1886. Moslem. Was an Inspector of Finance and later Director of Posts and Telegraphs in Faisal's Syrian Government of 1918-20. He was held responsible for delay in sending off Faisal's reply to General Gouraud's ultimatum in July 1920. (It was the absence of a reply that provided the excuse for General Gouraud to order French troops to advance on Damascus.) Exiled by the French but had fled to Egypt and later went to Iraq. Then he obtained an appointment as manager of the Arab Bank's Jaffa branch. Amnestied in 1937, he returned to Damascus and, as a loyal Nationalist, was appointed Director-General of Wakf. Minister of Education in Bukhari Cabinet, March to May 1939. Later became Director of Government Agricultural Bank. In September 1941 became President of Council and Minister of Finance in "Independent" Syria under the presidency of Sheikh Taj ed Din, as proclaimed by French. Quarrelled with President over latter's financial requests and with French over non-granting of various concessions of form to independence. Because of his rather stubborn and limited capacity was on bad terms with his colleagues, whom he was unable to pull together. Was undoubtedly pro-British, but was very indiscreet in falling under the influence of unworthy counsellors. He gave his enemies a chance to attack him because he openly proclaimed himself as opposed to the feudal landlords and because, although materially honest, he provoked laws to benefit himself in small ways. In April 1942 he was forced to resign in rather an unpleasant manner, after defying the President, and reverted to former employment as Director of the National (Syrian) Agricultural Bank until July 1944, when he retired. Subsequently criticised the actions of the President of the Republic and the Government in letters and memoranda and was outspokenly in favour of a Hashimite monarchy in Syria. Applied to visit London at the same time as the Emir Abdullah early in 1946, but was not granted a visa as his visit did not come under any category admissible at the time and it was not considered desirable to make any exception. Failed in 1947 elections. Elected as an Independent to the Constituent Assembly in November, 1949. Appointed Minister of State in Nazim Qudsi's Cabinet in September 1950. Resigned in October. A close friend of Munir Ajlani (q.v.). Has openly advocated that Syria should join the Western camp against Russia. Prime Minister and Minister of Finance from August to November 1951 when he resigned following a difference of view with his Minister for Foreign Affairs, Faidi Atassi (q.v.), about the Middle East Defence Pact. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Withdrew from 1954 elections after having failed on the first ballot. Attempted unsuccessfully to reconcile Khalid al Azm and Shakri Quwatly.

**40. Haroun, Assad**

Born in Latakia of a prominent local family. Moslem. First a Nationalist, then an Independent, he accepted the post of Minister of Justice shortly before Shishakli's fall but never became really

identified with the military régime. His election for Latakia in 1954 was invalidated on the grounds of bribery. Co-operated with Khalid al Azm (q.v.).

**41. Haroun, Taufiq**

Born about 1918. Sunni Moslem. Member of a prominent Latakia family.

Graduate of the School of Law at Damascus University.

Appointed Minister of Public Works on 9th June, 1952. Resigned on formation of new Government in July 1953.

Is quiet and unimpressive, though said to be ambitious. Appears to have owed his Ministerial post as much to family influence as to personal qualifications.

**42. Hatim, Anwar**

Born 1910. Roman Catholic. An Aleppine Christian educated in France, graduate of law from Paris University. Teacher of French Literature at the Tajhiz School, Damascus, 1933-36. Secretary to Prime Minister 1937-39. Assistant Chief of Diwan at Prime Minister's Office 1939-42. Director of Propaganda and Social Affairs April 1942-April 1943. Chief of Service in Prime Minister's Office April 1943-May 1945. Director of Prime Minister's Office May 1945. Appointed Second Counsellor at Ministry for Foreign Affairs March 1946 in addition to his other post. August 1947 sent on mission to London and was guest of British Council for a month. Combined the posts of secretary-general of the Secretariat of the Council of Ministers and director of the Prime Minister's Office, until he had to make way for a supporter of the régime in September 1952. He became Inspector-General of the Foreign Service until, in March 1953, he was appointed first Syrian Minister to the Holy See.

Intelligent. A supporter of Jamil Mardam and a friend of Munir Ajlani, he has frequently shown himself to be well disposed towards the British.

A staunch Roman Catholic, he appears to dislike (and be distrusted by) his Greek Orthodox brethren.

**43. Hindieh, Grégoire**

Armenian Catholic Archbishop of Aleppo. Born 1895 in Aleppo. Educated in the Armenian Seminary in Rome. Member of a wealthy Aleppo family with political connexions. A brother was at one time Minister of Finance. Formerly known as a Francophile; after his brother's resignation from the Finance Ministry he became a vehement critic of the French Administration in Syria, and later became just as critical of the Syrian Nationalist Administration.

A prelate whose interests are more temporal than spiritual and who is not much trusted locally.

**44. Homs, Edmond**

Born 1901, Aleppo. Greek Orthodox. Son of Albert Homsy, educated A.U.B. Switzerland and England, private banker with interests in Egypt, who did lucrative business with Turks during the 1914 war. He is an important shareholder in the Banque de Syrie et du Liban. Was Syrian Minister of Finance (March to October 1936). Member of Syrian delegation for the conclusion of the Franco-Syrian Treaty in 1936. Elected Nationalist Deputy for Aleppo, December 1936. Took unofficial charge of the British Consulate at Aleppo during 1941 evacuation and has always been outspoken in his British sympathies. However he is apt to be influenced by his wife who is pro-French. Was made honorary Commander of the British Empire. April 1946 appointed Minister of Finance in Saadullah Jabri's third Government when he instituted investigation into irregularities in Finance Ministry. Failed in 1947 elections on President's list. Appointed Syrian Minister to London (and to

Brussels) in June 1949. Relieved of his post in October 1952 on the grounds that he was out of touch with developments at home. Now back in Aleppo.

Intelligent and pleasant, if somewhat indolent.

**45. Houbby, Said, Brigadier**

A Moslem, born in 1902 in Damascus. In 1946 became Director of the Deuxième Bureau and in 1949 he was appointed military attaché in Washington. In 1950 he became Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff and later that year was given command of the Syrian air force. In 1951 he left the air force and was made Commander of the Armoured Forces and in 1952 was, in addition, made Commander of the Southern Region. Appointed military attaché in Ankara in April 1953. June 1953 promoted brigadier on leaving Ankara. July 1954 appointed to command the Northern Region.

He is a reserved but astute officer, slow but efficient and above the average in personality. He is a sick man as a result of a serious motor accident which injured his head.

He speaks Arabic and French, but no English.

**46. Hourani, Akram**

Born Hama about 1915. Sunni Moslem. Lawyer. Extremist leader of Youth Party of Hama. Joined Iraqi revolution 1941 at head of a small number of young men; met German commission in Homs and Aleppo. Deputy 1943, and Secretary of Chamber of Deputies. Intelligent and has considerable influence over young men, including sons of notables, in spite of his anti-feudal views. Was engaged in active agitation against the Feudal Party (Ghaleb Azm, Abdul Qader Kailani (q.v.)) and escaped arrest together with Raif Milqi (q.v.) only by intervention of the Prime Minister (February 1944). A leading member of the Constitutional Liberal Party and a most active critic of the Government. Re-elected Deputy for Hama 1947. Member of Parliamentary Constitutional Party 1948. Actually fought for six weeks with volunteers in Palestine early 1948, and urged severe measures in Government. An intimate counsellor of Zaim in the early days of the *coup d'Etat* of March 1949 and is said to have been responsible for many of the reforms which were then initiated. Broke with Zaim and after the latter's death became Minister of Agriculture in Hashem Atassi's Cabinet of August 1949 in which he was the most dynamic member. Elected as an Independent to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Headed the group in the Assembly which strongly opposed Syro-Iraqi union and found powerful support among Army officers, notably Lieut.-Colonel (then) Adib Shishakli (q.v.) with whom he threw in his lot. Appointed Minister of Defence in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. In January 1950 formed his own Radical-Socialist Party the "Arab Socialist Party." Resigned from the Cabinet in April 1950. Married early in 1951. He rarely appeared in public. He has tried to rally all Left-wing elements to his party, and has turned a blind eye to the penetration of his party by known Communists. Became estranged from Shishakli and was suspected of being implicated in plotting with some army officers against the régime at the end of 1952 and took refuge with Salahuddin Bitar (q.v.) and Michel Aflaq (q.v.) in the Lebanon early in January 1953. From there he carried on propaganda and intrigues against the régime until asked by the Lebanese Government to leave in June 1953. Together with Bitar and Aflaq was permitted to return to Syria in October 1953. The three of them agreed to amalgamate the Ba'ath Party, led by the two former, with Hourani's Arab Socialist Party. Hourani became the leader of the new Arab Ba'ath Socialist Party. Following overthrow of Shishakli, officers sympathising with

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Hourani obtained several of the most important posts in the army. He and his followers gained a notable victory at Hama in the 1954 elections by defeating all the feudal candidates. In the new Parliament began by co-operating in the Opposition with Khalid al Azm's Democratic bloc.

Knows no foreign language. A fiery and compelling speaker. A man with considerable drive but vain and irresponsible. Ambitious and ruthless. Distinctly anti-Western.

**47. Husseini, Ibrahim, Colonel**

Born 1913 in Homs. A Moslem. In March 1949 he commanded the Military Police. In August 1949 he was arrested and imprisoned following the Hinnawi *coup d'Etat*. In October 1949 he was reinstated to his command. He was appointed Director of the Deuxième Bureau in January 1950. In August 1950 he was arrested for the murder of Colonel Mohamed Nasser, Commander of the Air Force. After acquittal, he left for France. In 1952 he returned at General Shishakli's request and was made Director-General of Police and the Sûreté. Early in 1953 he was promoted to colonel as a reward for stifling a plot against the régime in which senior army officers were involved. Immediately after suppressing serious riots he was appointed in December 1953 as military attaché at Washington. It was evident that General Shishakli feared that Husseini was becoming too powerful. May 1953 transferred to be military attaché at Rome.

He is a very intelligent and able officer who is feared for his ruthlessness. Commands respect. Speaks fluent French.

**48. Ibish, Nuri**

Born about 1895 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Educated at A.U.B. and Cirencester Agricultural College. Appointed by Saadullah Jabri's Government to be Director-General of Tribal Affairs (March 1944) on the cession of the Tribal Department by the French to the Syrians. Resigned November 1946. Elected Deputy for Damascus 1947, receiving highest number of votes cast, which made him aspire to the Presidency. Has spent a great deal of money on the improvement of his farm near Damascus. Was co-opted Minister of Agriculture in Husni Zaim's two Cabinets and worked hard to reform his Ministry. Appointed Minister of the Interior in Government formed in July 1953. Enhanced his reputation by resigning in protest against the way in which the 1953 elections were being "managed." Narrowly failed as an Independent candidate for Damascus in 1954 elections.

Well disposed towards Britain.

**49. Istuani, Ibrahim, Dr.**

Moslem. Born 1906 in Damascus of a good family with a legal tradition. Married. Studied economics and law at the Syrian University, the Sorbonne, and the University of Vienna. Spent some years in Austria, and on his return here was employed at the Austrian Consulate in Damascus. Appointed Honorary Austrian Consul here in 1939. Left Syria during the war years returning in 1945, when he was appointed Director-General of Political Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In 1949 he became Secretary-General of the Ministry. During this period he was friendly and helpful to the legation, who found him hard-working, honest and efficient. At the end of 1949 he left and went into business for a short time, but was appointed Syrian Consul-General in the Federal German Republic in 1950. Reappointed Secretary-General at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in 1953.

He is not known to have taken part in any political activities. He speaks French, English and fluent German. A very hard worker with moderate views and friendly common sense.

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**50. Jabri, Ihsan**

Born Aleppo about 1885. Sunni Moslem. Brother of the late Saadullah al Jabri. Deputy for Aleppo in the Parliament at Constantinople during the Turkish régime and for a time aide-de-camp to the Sultan. Returned to Aleppo after the war and proceeded to Damascus, where he was Chamberlain to King Faisal during the latter's short reign. Fled with King Faisal at the time of the French occupation of Damascus, first to Palestine and then to Iraq. In 1924 he was delegated by the Syrian Arabs to go to Geneva to uphold the cause of Syrian independence at the League of Nations in company with the Druse leader, the Emir Shakib Arslan. Sentenced by the French to permanent banishment from Syria and remained in Europe working for Syrian independence from 1924 to 1937. Amnestied in April 1937 and was Mohafiz of Latakia in November 1937 to April 1939. Was actively associated with bread strikes in Aleppo, March 1941. Arrested by the British in Aleppo in September 1942 as potentially dangerous, but released in September 1943. Failed in 1947 elections; president of the Aleppo branch of National Party 1948. Openly opposed Shishakli. Returned as a Nationalist for Aleppo in 1954 elections, but as a result of personal quarrels separated himself nominally from the Nationalist Party in Aleppo. Reported to be jealous of his son-in-law, Majduddin Jabri (q.v.). President of the Foreign Affairs Committee in the Parliament elected in 1954. An enthusiastic Nationalist of influence who still has personal ambitions.

**51. Jabri, Majduddin**

Born in Aleppo in 1910. Sunni Moslem. Son of Kemal Bey Jabri and nephew of Saadullah Bey Jabri; married to Hale, daughter of Ihsan Bey Jabri (brother of Saadullah Bey). Educated at Aleppo and for five years at Robert College, Istanbul. Spent three years, 1932 to 1935, in United States (B.A., Illinois University) where he studied engineering. Served for six years in the Public Works Department of the Palestine Government and seconded for service in Transjordan (1937-43). Secretary-General of Aleppo Municipality 1944-45 and became President of the Municipality in 1946. Took office as Minister of Public Works in Khaled el Azm's non-party Government of December 1948. Although invited by Husni Zaim to act as public works adviser he refused and was apparently against the régime. Also refused the post of Minister of Public Works in Hashim Atassi's Cabinet of August 1949. At end of 1949 he apparently gave up all idea of returning to Syrian politics. 1953-54 Head of the Public Works Department at Kuwait. In mid-1954 returned to Aleppo where he was the most successful Nationalist candidate in the 1954 elections. Though elected Deputy he went to Europe and refused appointment as Minister of Public Works in Fares el Khouri's Cabinet. Is negotiating to return to his former post at Kuwait. Well educated, practical, moderate and less susceptible to party and family influences than most Arabs, but pays much heed to his wife. Devotes his spare time to exploiting his father's many estates. Speaks excellent English and good French; the main hope for the future of the Jabri family.

**52. Jabri, Rashad**

Born in Damascus in 1910. Moslem. Has an English wife and also a Syrian. Educated at the French Lazarist School in Damascus and at the American University in Beirut. Trained as mechanical engineer, specialising in the cotton industry at Manchester University. Engineer at the Delta Commercial Company 1935-1938, returned to Damascus in 1939 where he

held a similar appointment with the Syrian Petroleum Company until 1941. Appointed Director of the Transport and Technical Service of the "Mira" (Cereals Organisation) 1941-43, Director of the Traffic and Tyre Distribution Service of the Ministry of Public Works 1943-45; Director of the Commercial Industrial United Company (the Big Five) 1945-49; Director-General of the Middle East Resources Company 1950-51, then was appointed for a period of two months as Mohafiz of the City of Damascus. Minister of Public Works in the Government formed by Sabri Assali on March 1, 1954, after the overthrow of the Shishakli régime and elected Deputy for the two Ghoutas in October 1954. Was one of the founders of the Liberal Party which was later transformed into the Populist Party and in 1954 was elected President of the Damascus branch of the party.

Unimpressive and untrustworthy.

**53. Kahlali, Nuruddin**

Born 1908 in Homs. Moslem. Educated at Robert College, Istanbul, where he obtained his B.Sc. in electrical engineering; later went to Illinois College, United States and graduated in Civil Engineering. On his return to Syria in 1929 he worked for two years as engineer with the Damascus Tramway and Electricity Company, and from 1931-34 was employed in a similar capacity with the Cement Company in Damascus.

He started his career as a Civil Servant in 1935 when he entered the Public Works Department as engineer for the Damascus Municipality, a position which he held until 1941. He was then appointed Chief of the Irrigation Department, and promoted to be Director of Irrigation in 1944. During that year he represented Syria at the International Air Conference at Chicago, and also accompanied the Syrian Delegation to the United Nations Organisation Conference in San Francisco in 1945.

He was Secretary of the Syrian Engineers' Association when it was founded in 1942. In 1947 he was appointed Director-General of the Ministry of Public Works and Communications, and in 1948 was promoted to Secretary-General of the Ministry. Appointed director of the Latakia Port Project in 1951.

Nuruddin Kahlali, who is regarded as the most qualified engineer in the Government service, is a hard worker and has devoted a good deal of time as technical adviser to the Government in connexion with the various Syrian economic development schemes, notably the Yarmouk Hydro-Electric Scheme.

Kahlali speaks fluent English, and reasonably good French.

**54. Kailani, Rashid, Lieutenant-Colonel**

Born Hama about 1924. Married. Moslem. Speaks fluent French and poor English. 1950 appointed Head of the Air Force. May 1953 promoted lieutenant-colonel. A very able officer and a good commander. His capabilities in organising and training the Air Force are recognised by the Ministry of Defence who are thus content to leave a comparatively junior officer as head of the rapidly expanding young Air Force. Possesses great charm and is generally liked both by his own countrymen and foreigners. It is through his efforts that the Syrian Air Force has standardised on British aircraft and methods of training.

**55. Kayyali, Abdurrahman**

Born 1890 in Aleppo. Sunni Moslem. Educated in the American University of Beirut. Married into the Mudarres family. King Faisal's Chamberlain at Damascus. Prominent Nationalist but inclined to preach moderation. Elected Nationalist Deputy for Aleppo in 1936. Minister of Education

and of Justice in the former Nationalist Government. Went to Geneva in December 1936 to put forward the Arab claim for Alexandretta. Sent from Damascus to Aleppo in February 1937 to apologise to the French for the Iron Shirt clash with the French Gendarmerie. Minister of Education and Justice in the second Jamil Mardam Cabinet (July 1937 to February 1939). Minister of National Economy in the Lutfi Haffar Cabinet (February to March 1939). His moderate party was swamped in July 1943 elections by Saadullah Jabri, but he was eventually elected himself and was Minister for Justice in Saadullah Jabri's first Government August 1943 to October 1944. Minister of Justice and Minister of Public Works in Fares Khouri's first Government October 1944 to April 1945. Became a leading member of the Constitutional Liberal Party and lost no opportunity of attacking succeeding Governments in the Chamber of Deputies. Failed in 1947 elections. Member of Syrian Delegation to United Nations General Assembly in Paris, 1948. Became President of the National Party in 1949. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Unsuccessful in 1954 elections. Intelligent, but not masterful.

**56. Kekhia, Rushdi**

Born 1905. Belongs to a well-known middle-class Aleppo Moslem family. Studied law at Damascus University. Elected Deputy for Aleppo, December 1936, he became known for his vehement speeches in the Syrian Assembly. Resigned from the National bloc, March 1939. Deputy for Aleppo in 1943 in opposition to both the Jabri and Kayyali groups, and remained opposed to them in Parliament; re-elected in 1947 on list of Parliamentary Constitutional Party. He is known and admired as a man sincerely devoted to constitutional practices, which he carried with him into the Popular Party whose leader he became in August 1948. His opposition to the Mardam and Khaled el Azm Cabinets in 1948 and his obstinate refusal to associate himself with the Zaim régime made him extremely popular. After the overthrow of Zaim he accepted the post of Minister of the Interior in Hashim Atassi's predominantly Popular Party Cabinet. In November 1949 elected to the Constituent Assembly, of which he was President. At that time a strong protagonist of Syro-Iraqi union.

President of the Chamber of Deputies from September 1950 until March 1951 when he resigned following the fall of Nazim Qudsi's Government. Imprisoned after General Shishakli's *coup d'Etat* of 29th November, 1951, released, April 1952. Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Returned for Aleppo at 1954 elections.

A man of some character and seriousness of purpose but not much brain. Reported to be tired of politics.

**57. Khatib, Muhammad Subhi**

Born 1911 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Studied in Syrian elementary schools. Showed an interest in social affairs from an early age. Began his career as a labourer in a textile factory. There he organised the first Syrian trade union in 1929. He devoted his leisure to study and the spread of the trade union movement. By 1936 he had created unions in several trades in Damascus. In 1937 he succeeded in winning official approval for a Syrian Labour Law. In 1946 he carried his work a stage further by securing the passage of a comprehensive and progressive Labour Law. He succeeded in unifying the Trade Union Movement in Syria. Since 1933 he has used journalism as an instrument in his struggle. His main contributions have appeared in the local magazines

of which he has been editor at various times. Early in 1950 he began publishing a trade union newspaper called *Al Ummal* which has lain dormant from time to time for lack of funds. Visited the United Kingdom as guest of His Majesty's Government in 1951, and the United States as guest of United States Government in 1953. Though formerly opposed to communism and certainly not a Communist himself, he has been forced to co-operate with them in order to maintain his position. Did not receive Communist support in 1954 elections, at which he failed badly. Though nearly defeated by a Socialist candidate who was supported by the Communists, he was re-elected in 1954 to the office, which he has continuously held, of President of the General Council of Syrian Trades Union.

He is a man of high principle, intelligent, industrious and slightly self-effacing in company.

**58. Khoja, Hamid**

Born 1907 in Raqqa and of a family of religious teachers. Sunni Moslem. Educated at the Franciscan School at Aleppo and at the Teachers' Training College, Aleppo. Studied law in Paris, where he obtained his degree. Deputy for Raqqa 1932-36 and again 1943. Appointed Kaimakam 1937 first at Ziwiyeh and then at Jerablous. A leading member of the Constitutional Liberal Party, he failed in the 1947 elections as the result of the intervention of the Syrian President in favour of his own candidate. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Secretary of the Republican Liberal bloc formed by Abdul Baqi Nizamuddin (q.v.) early in 1950. Minister of Public Works in Hassan Hakim's (q.v.) Government from August to November 1951. President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber in the 1949 Parliament. Returned for Raqqa in the 1954 elections.

His influence might prove important in the tribal area where he is the recognised political leader of a number of influential tribal sheikhs. Has shown readiness to co-operate with the British and is an agreeable and cultivated widely travelled individual.

**59. Khouri, Faiz**

Born about 1891 in the Lebanon. Greek Orthodox. Educated by Irish Presbyterian Mission, at American College, Beirut, and at Law School, Istanbul. Originally Protestant, but converted to Orthodoxy in 1935 as latter community had representative in Chamber and Protestants had not. Elected to the Constituent Assembly, 1928, as mouthpiece for his brother Fares (q.v.). Noted Nationalist. Dean of the Faculty of Law at the Syrian University, Damascus, from year 1941 to 1943. Nationalist Deputy in 1932 with great following among university students. Played a leading part in the first session of Parliament and again during the general strike of 1936. Re-elected Deputy in December 1936. Head of the Damascus Bar, 1936 to 1940. Minister of Finance and Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs in the fifteen day ministry of Lutfi Haffar, 1939. Minister for Foreign Affairs under Hassan al Hakim, September 1941 to April 1942, and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Minister of Finance in Husni Barazi Government (April 1942 to January 1943). Took strong line with the French over concessions of form to Syrian independence, but was unsuccessful. In agreement with Lebanese, struggled to obtain control of "Intérêts Communs." Framed budget for 1942 balanced (on paper) with proceeds from new taxes on income and agriculture. Was president of Commission supérieure to monopolise Syrian wheat, and displayed considerable energy and courage. Was attacked by landlords, &c., as being a Christian and corrupt, and forced to resign presidency of Wheat Office in July 1942. When Jemil Ulshi replaced



Husni Barazi as Prime Minister (January 1943) Faiz Khouri gave up the Ministry of Finance, retaining only the Ministry for Foreign Affairs; one of the reasons for this being that it was felt that, as a Christian, he was not in a strong position to enforce taxation projects. He remained in office until the fall of the Ulshi Government, March 1943. His association with the non-parliamentary régime of 1941-43 brought him into disfavour with the Nationalists, who refused to include him on their electoral list. He stood as an independent and failed, retiring to Beirut where he remained for a year. Appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Moscow April 1945; remaining there for a few months only he returned to Damascus and was appointed as Acting Director-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, October to December 1945. Placed on pension 1946. Appointed Syrian Minister to Washington, June 1947. Head of Syrian delegation to United Nations Assembly, September 1949 and 1950. Appointed ambassador to London in September 1952.

A man of moderate political opinions and considerable intelligence with undoubted ambition but has the reputation of being difficult to work with. Speaks good English and French. Despite his religion, is on good terms with Moslems.

#### 60. Khouri, Faris

Born about 1875 in the Lebanon. Brother of Faiz Khouri (q.v.). Educated at American College at Beirut. Protestant. Was a dragoman at British Consulate, Damascus, from 1899 to 1909. A member of the Turkish Parliament in 1913. Lawyer. Minister of Finance under Faisal, when he discreetly lined his pockets. Minister of Public Instruction under Damad, 1926. Deported some months later on suspicion of assisting rebels, thus winning martyr's crown of glory and confidence of Moslems. Well-off. Chairman of board of directors of National Cement Company; was professor of the School of Law, but resigned in 1941; legal adviser to the municipality until 1942, when he passed it to his son Suhail. Took leading part in the general strike of 1936. Went to Paris in March 1936 as member of the Nationalist delegation to negotiate a Franco-Syrian treaty. Deputy, December 1936. Elected President of the Chamber of Deputies (Speaker) on 21st December, 1936, in recognition of his services to the Nationalist bloc in the treaty negotiations. From fall of Nationalist Government in 1939, played no active part in politics until 1943, when he was re-elected Deputy by a bare majority and again in 1947. President of the Chamber August 1943 to October 1944 and again October 1945 to October 1946. Prime Minister and Minister for Interior and for Education, October 1944 to April 1945. Member of Syrian Committee which signed Charter of Arab League, March 1945; Prime Minister April to August 1945. Head of Syrian Delegation to United Nations Organisation Conference at San Francisco April 1945. Prime Minister August to October 1945. Head of Syrian Delegation to United Nations Organisation Conference at London, November 1945, and to Round Table Conference on Palestine in London August 1946 and to United Nations General Assembly Session October 1947. Syrian Representative on Security Council December 1946-48. On his return to Syria enjoyed the position of revered elder statesman. Although he gave Zaim's régime his blessing he criticised what he considered to be the unconstitutional nature of some of Zaim's acts. Represents Syria on the United Nations International Law Commission. Came out strongly against the clause in the draft Constitution (April 1950) making Islam the religion of the State. Replaced by Farid Zainuddin (q.v.) in June, 1951 as head of the Permanent Syrian Delegation to the

United Nations, but headed the Syrian Delegation to the General Assembly in the autumn of 1951, and was again appointed Head of the Delegation in 1954 but did not proceed. After prolonged Cabinet crisis in October 1954 in which several political leaders refused or failed to form a Government, the President, with general approval, called on Faris Khouri. Nevertheless, it was only with difficulty that he formed a Right-wing coalition.

Is a prudent and skilful, if unscrupulous, politician, who is, despite his religion, on good terms with the Moslems and not with the Christians. Talks excellent English. A likeable but obstinate old man. Is clearly now intellectually well past his prime.

#### 61. Khouri, Suheil

Born in Damascus in 1910. Son of Fares al Khoury. Presbyterian. Educated at the French Lazarist School in Damascus. Obtained his law degree at the Syrian University in Damascus and his doctorate of law from the Jesuit University in Beirut. Is the Legal Adviser to the Damascus City Municipality. Returned for Damascus as a Nationalist in 1954 elections. Unlike his father, he is inclined to be an ineffective and rather weak character. Believed to owe what success he has achieved to his father's influence.

#### 62. Kuzbari, Maamoun

Born about 1905. Moslem. Educated at the Jesuit School in Beirut where he obtained his law degree. Practised law in Damascus. In 1948 he represented the Syndicate of Lawyers at the International Lawyers' Conference held in Geneva. As a leading member of the Liberation Party which was formed by General Shishakli he was elected President of the Chamber in June 1953. Under the constitution then in force, he became Acting President of the Republic following General Shishakli's flight in February 1954, but he was forced to resign within two days. Stood as an Independent in the 1954 elections and was elected for Damascus.

An intelligent and not unfriendly person.

#### 63. Kuzbari, Nader

Born about 1913. Sunni Moslem. Comes of a well-to-do Damascus family. Holds a French doctorate of law (1937).

Formerly a member of the Council of State, he was promoted to the rank of counsellor in this body in 1951. He has also held a number of judicial and administrative posts.

Married to a daughter of the former Nationalist Party leader Lutfi Haffar (q.v.). He is the second most senior official in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has acted as Secretary-General on a number of occasions.

Rather pompous and, probably, anxious to prove himself a good pan-Arab. Very ineffective. He has an agreeable and cultivated wife.

#### 64. Lian, Mikhael Michel

Born Aleppo 1900. Greek Orthodox. Educated American University, Beirut. Professes an extreme form of nationalism. Was secretary at Aleppo of the Nationalist bloc before he was elected Deputy for Aleppo in July 1943. In August 1945 he organised a large number of Deputies to present a petition to the President of the Chamber asking for the resignation of Faris Khouri's second Government. August to November 1945 Minister for Foreign Affairs in Fares Khouri's third Government. April to December 1946 Minister of Public Works in Saadullah Jabri's third Government. Failed in the 1947 elections on the President's list, but became Minister of National Economy in Jamil Mardam's 1948 Government. Pretended to co-operate with Husni Zaim but secretly worked hard against him.

Opposed to the draft Constitution and method of election as President of General Shishakli (July 1953). Returned for Aleppo in the 1954 elections.

Speaks some English and French and has shown himself anxious to be well regarded by the British. He is an assiduous political intriguer and enjoyed Saadullah Jabri's support but otherwise appears to be stupid and incompetent.

#### 65. Malik, Hanna

Born in Damascus in 1900. Greek Orthodox. Educated at the Eastern College in Zahleh, Lebanon, the Greek Orthodox Secondary School in Damascus and at the American University of Beirut. Obtained his law degree at the Faculty of Law of the Syrian University in Damascus. Appointed magistrate in 1925, Adviser to the Court of Appeal in 1938, Public Attorney at the Court of Appeal in 1942, Inspector at the Ministry of Justice in 1947, and Prosecutor-General at the Court of Cassation in 1948. In addition to this post he was made Secretary-General of the Council of Ministers in March 1954, and still holds the appointment.

He is a straightforward, sincere and very efficient civil servant; well disposed towards the British. Speaks English and French.

#### 66. Malki, Adnan, Colonel

Born Damascus about 1916. Moslem. A professional soldier who joined the army in 1934. Commander 8th Infantry Regiment in 1948. Director 3rd Bureau and promoted major, 1949, in which year he also went to France to study general mobilisation in peace and war. Director of 1st Bureau, 1949. Ecole de Guerre, Paris, 1949. In 1950 he was again appointed Director of 3rd Bureau, Ecole Supérieure de Guerre, 1951. October 1951 promoted lieutenant-colonel. In December 1952 he was forcibly retired and imprisoned by Colonel Shishakli for having plotted to overthrow him. He was then released under amnesty after having served eight months' hard labour. In September 1953, he founded United Military Front, whose aim was to overthrow General Shishakli. After Shishakli's departure, he was reinstated in army as Head of 3rd Bureau and promoted colonel, 1954.

Has a charming personality, but is inclined to be unstable owing to his hotheadedness. He is extremely friendly with Akram Hourani, and although his political sympathies are with the extreme Left he would not tolerate communism. Although still young, he is regarded as the potential leader of an eventual army *coup d'Etat*.

Speaks fluent French and fair English.

#### 67. Maloyan, Hrnt

Armenian Catholic. Born Istanbul 1895; graduate of Istanbul College; teacher Military College Istanbul 1915-16. Took part in 1914-18 war with 53rd Turkish Division at Ghaza. Chief of the Armenian Division in the French army at Beirut in 1918. As second lieutenant took part in occupation of Adana and Cilicia; promoted to rank of captain 1918; was appointed to Syrian Gendarmerie at Aleppo, Acre and Antioch 1921 to 1925, during Syrian revolution was transferred to Damascus 1925-26 in charge of Gendarmerie Transport Company; from 1935-37 was Officer Commanding, Gendarmerie Hama, Deir-ze-Zor and Euphrates. 1939-41 Officer Commanding, Gendarmerie, Damascus, Mohafazat. 1942-45 was promoted to rank of lieutenant-colonel and appointed Officer Commanding, Gendarmerie, First Legion. In August 1945 was promoted to rank of colonel and appointed acting Commandant-General of Gendarmerie. He took no part in the *coups d'Etat* of Zaim and Hinnawi although he could easily have cashed in. He was retired after the second *coup d'Etat* in August 1949. Became B.O.A.C. sales representative in Damascus in 1952.

Extremely able and intelligent. It was largely due to his capability that the Syrian Gendarmerie has been reorganised and has reached a reasonable standard of efficiency. Always ready to co-operate with the British but since the *coups d'Etat* of 1949 has become suspect because of his close connexion with them. He speaks Arabic, English, French, Turkish, Greek, Italian and Armenian.

#### 68. Mardam, Abdulrahman, Colonel

A Sunni Moslem, born Damascus 1916. Entered Military School, Homs, 1937 and later that year entered St. Cyr, France as officer cadet. 1939, graduated from St. Cyr and appointed second-lieutenant in the Syrian army. 1942, promoted lieutenant. 1944, promoted captain. 1945, served in Syrian gendarmerie and later that year resigned from the French forces. 1946, made provost marshal. 1948, commanded the 1st Armoured Battalion in the Palestinian war. 1949, promoted major and given local rank of lieutenant-colonel on appointment as military attaché, London. 1952, promoted to full colonel.

This officer is intelligent and of average ability, but idle and takes little interest in his work as military attaché.

#### 69. Mardam, Haidar

Brother-in-law of Jamil Mardam Bey. Born Damascus, 1898. Sunni Moslem. Graduated from Law School, Damascus, 1923. Married Damascus Christian and went to France to study law for several years. Secretary to municipality 1929-30. In 1936 Kaimakam at Ma'arat. January 1938 (Nationalist Government) "chef du protocole" in the Foreign Office and in March 1938 appointed Acting Mohafiz of Jezirah. In July 1939 Kaimakam of Idlib. In August 1941 appointed Mohafiz of Homs, where he remained until June 1942, when he was dismissed because he was suspected by Syrian Government of carrying information to French. In August 1942 he was appointed to the Foreign Office as "chef du protocole." Mohafiz of Hauran, April 1943 to March 1946, when he was transferred to the central office at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, but refused to take up his post as it was graded lower in rank than that of Mohafiz. While Mohafiz of the Hauran he was suspected by the Government of being in suspiciously close touch with Amman, but was the first to "clean up" the French in 1945, when he seems to have shown energy, courage and ability to handle a fluid situation, and firmness tempered with justice towards a defeated enemy. Appointed Syrian Minister to Jedda in March 1947. Recalled in June 1949. Appointed Syrian Minister to Rome in June 1951. Appointed Minister at Bagdad in 1954.

Mildly Nationalist in politics, pleasant and open-minded, but rather lacking in energy.

#### 70. Mardam, Jamil

Born about 1890 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Nationalist member of Constituent Assembly 1928. Deputy in 1932 and Minister of Finance. Was a member of the Nationalist delegation that went to Paris in March 1936 and became Prime Minister and Minister of National Economy December 1936 to July 1937. He formed new Cabinet July 1937, but his Government was attacked, notably by Dr. Shahbandar and Munir Ajlani, over the 1936 Franco-Syrian Treaty. Relations between Mardam and Shahbandar continued to deteriorate until the former was forced to resign. He and his Cabinet were openly accused by the press of great corruption and peculation. When Shahbandar was murdered in July 1940 Jamil Mardam was accused by the Shahbandarists of complicity and, with a few others, fled to Bagdad. Was in Bagdad at the beginning of the Rashid Ali revolt (May 1941), but is



believed to have exerted moderating influence on rebels. Returned to Syria May 1941.

In January 1942 he went to Egypt, and, on his return, tried to provoke a political crisis by pretending that he enjoyed the confidence of the British, who had asked him to form a Government. He repeated this manoeuvre with greater insistence in June 1942. As a result, the Allies obliged him to live in the Lebanon and a communiqué was issued condemning his action. Elected Deputy in 1943 and in 1947 on Shukri Quwatli's list. Minister for Foreign Affairs and president of Cereals Commission in Saadallah Jabri's first Government, August 1943 to October 1944. Syrian representative on the Committee of Foreign Ministers of Arab Countries which met in Cairo in February 1945 to draw up Arab League Charter. Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Defence and Government representative to Supreme Mira Council in Faris Khouri's first Government, October 1944 to April 1945. Minister for Foreign Affairs and for Defence in Faris Khouri's second Government, April to August 1945; Acting Prime Minister during the Prime Minister's absence at U.N.O. Conference in San Francisco and was therefore head of the Government at the time of the events of May 1945. Appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to Cairo, October 1945, and also to Saudi Arabia, October 1945, and presided at November 1945 session of Arab League, and on several other occasions has represented Syria at Arab League Meetings. Prime Minister and Minister of Interior and Health December 1946 to February 1947. Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs April 1947. Appointed Military Governor Syria 15th May, 1948. Minister of Defence 23rd May, 1948. His Government was forced to resign in December 1948 by popular demonstrations. Has since lived outside Syria.

Foxy, *souple* and a trimmer. A man of great ambition and considerable ability, but not very scrupulous in money matters. Is probably the most likely of the leading members of the old National *bloc* to ally himself with a monarchical movement if he thought his interests lay that way.

#### 71. Mardam, Khalil

Sunni Moslem. Born about 1896 in Damascus where he attended the secondary school. He then went to Cambridge. Minister of Education in 1942. Minister of Education and Health in 1949 (under the Ziam régime). Appointed Minister to Iraq in 1951. Appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in Government formed in July 1953. Disappeared quietly from the political scene with the fall of Shishakli, February 1954.

A poet and writer. Director-General of the Syrian Arab Academy in Damascus in 1948 and visited the United Kingdom that year as a British Council visitor. Elected president of the Syrian Arab Academy in 1953. Also a member of the Fuad 1st Academy, Cairo, and of Oriental Studies, London.

Charming and genuinely pro-British but weak.

#### 72. Mulqi, Raif

Born Hama about 1905 of humble family. Sunni Moslem. Lawyer. Extreme Nationalist and fomenter of riots. Deputy for Hama 1943 but failed in 1947. Became a leading member of the Constitutional Liberal Party and at one time joint editor of *Al Yaqza* with Akram Hourani (*q.v.*). Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as an Independent. Vice-President of the Assembly. Fell out with Akram Hourani before the elections and joined the coalition list of Husni Barazi. Was a bitter foe of Akram Hourani in Assembly debates. Appointed Minister of Education and Acting Minister of National Economy in the Cabinet

formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951. After forming some sort of alliance with Hourani he was returned for Hama in the 1954 elections against the opposition of Husni Barazi and the "feudalists." In the Chamber he co-operated with Khalid al Azm rather than with Hourani.

Very intelligent and used to have considerable influence over the masses, who supported his anti-feudal policy. Sincerely believes in his cause. Is prepared to use violence. He is a violent orator and entirely without scruples. His demagoguery can be very effective.

#### 73. Mubarak, Muhammad

Born 1912 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Son of the late Abdul Qadir Mubarak (of Algerian origin), who was a prominent member of the Arab Academy, Damascus. Graduate of Syrian University, faculties of law, arts and sciences. Also holds a licence in literature from the Sorbonne. A teacher in the Government secondary school of Damascus, he later became an inspector of education. Leading member of the Ikhwan al Muslimeen and elected to Parliament in 1947 as their candidate. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as one of the candidates of the Islamic Socialist Front. Appointed Minister of Public Works in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm in December 1949. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. After Ma'ruf Dawalibi's Cairo statement in April 1950 Muhammad Mubarak, together with Shaikh Mustafa al Sebai and the rest of the Islamic Socialist Front, began publicly to advocate a rapprochement between the Arab States and the Soviet Union, and called for a treaty of friendship between Syria and the Soviet Union. They later ceased this clamour and even made statements against communism. Allied with People's Party in 1951. Mubarak became Minister of Agriculture in Hassan Hakim's Government, August to November 1951, and in Ma'ruf Dawalibi's Government, 28th to 29th November, 1951. Imprisoned in January 1952 by General Shishakli when he and Mustafa Sibai showed signs of preparing to call out the mobs ostensibly in support of Egypt but really to upset or embarrass the régime. Officially resigned from the Brotherhood early in 1954 but this seemed to make little difference to his continuous political activity. He was persistently referred to as a Brotherhood candidate. Appointed as Syrian Minister at Tehran but, being returned for Damascus in the 1954 elections, he did not proceed.

#### 74. Mudarris, Suleiman

Born about 1910 in Aleppo. Sunni Moslem. Educated at the American University at Beirut and St. John's College, Oxford, joined the I.P.C. in 1932. Between 1933-35 he assisted in negotiations for concessional areas in Arabia. Seconded to Petroleum Concessions, Ltd., in 1936. Appointed manager of Syrian Petroleum Company and Iraq Petroleum Company in Syria in 1941; became General Representative of the Iraq Petroleum Company in Syria in June 1952.

A widower. Now turns rather towards the French. Agreeable and efficient though lazy and not of outstanding ability. He takes no part in politics though his sympathies are probably with the National Party.

#### 75. Mahairi, Issam

Born about 1920 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Educated at Lycée Franco-Arabe and later at Syrian University. Comes of a well-to-do property-owning family. Unmarried.

Elected to Parliament in 1950, was P.P.S. Member for Damascus. After the dissolution of Parliament and the political parties, was believed to have been

close to General Shishakli, who was once himself an active member of the same party. He was thus a rival to Akram Hourani. Owner of the paper *El Bina*. Though apparently favoured by General Shishakli, he did not support the military régime. He visited the United Kingdom with a Syrian press delegation as a guest of Her Majesty's Government in 1952 and visited Yugoslavia in 1953. Unsuccessful at 1954 elections.

Like most members of his party he exudes doctrine and is slightly xenophobic. Speaks French and some English.

#### 76. Mujhim bin Muhaid, Amir

Born about 1885. Bedouin chief, head of the Fedaan Wuld tribe in the Jezirah and Euphrates region. Given the title of Amir and awarded the Legion of Honour by the French in 1921 on the model of the chiefs of the Rualla. Deputy for Jezirah in 1936, 1943 and 1947. Had well-armed forces and was supported by the French though he was careful not to offend the British. Of considerable importance but unpleasant, cold and astute in character, and likely to turn any emergency to his advantage. His eldest son, Nouri, who was elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 and to the Chamber in 1954, lacks his father's dignity and astuteness.

#### 77. Nizamuddin, Abdul Baqi

Born 1903 in the Nassibain, Turkey, where his father was Kaimakam. Elementary education. Is recognised as a political leader of Moslems in the Jezireh. Was elected Deputy in 1943 with French support, but since then has professed strong independent Arab views, and was re-elected in 1947. Owns large properties, from which he draws his income. Reported to have sympathised with the revolt of Rashid Ali in Iraq. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Minister of Agriculture in Khalid al Azm's Cabinet of December 1949. Formed the Republican Liberal *bloc* in the Assembly in March 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet in May 1950. Appointed Minister of Agriculture and Acting Minister of Justice in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951. Reputed to have appropriated large tracts of land when in office. He is now farming on a large scale in the Jezireh. Returned for Kamichle in the 1954 elections and became a prominent member of Khalid al Azm's Democratic *bloc*. His brother was appointed Deputy Chief of Staff in 1954.

#### 78. Qanbar, Ahmed

Born about 1910. Sunni Moslem. An Aleppo lawyer. Leading member of the Aleppo branch of the People's Party. Owner of *Al Nadhir* the organ of the People's Party in Aleppo. First elected to Parliament in 1947. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Appointed Minister of Public Works in Nazim Qudsi's Cabinet in September 1950. Resigned with the rest of the Cabinet on 9th March, 1951. Minister of the Interior in Ma'ruf Dawalibi's (*q.v.*) Government on 28th and 29th November, 1951. Imprisoned by General Shishakli after the latter's *coup d'Etat* and released in April 1952. Returned for Aleppo in 1954 elections. Minister of the Interior in Faris Khouri's Government October 1954.

An able and eloquent politician who, with Nazim Qudsi (*q.v.*) built up the People's Party. Reputedly honest although accused of nepotism and corruption by his political enemies.

#### 79. Qouli, Ismail

Born in Damascus in 1916. Sunni Moslem. Educated at the Tajhiz School in Damascus and obtained his law degree at the Law Faculty of

Syrian University. Practised law, then was appointed magistrate at Nebek. Appointed Assistant Prosecutor-General in Damascus. Made President of the Military Court during the Shishakli régime. Does not belong to any political party. Reputed to be honest. Was appointed Mohafez of Damascus City in March 1954 to prepare the way for impartial and free elections. In June 1954 was made Minister of the Interior in the Said Ghazzi Government for the same purpose. Praised for the way in which he handled elections but instead of recovering his post at Damascus as he had hoped, he was appointed Mohafez of Lattakia.

#### 80. Qudsi, Nazim

Born 1906 in Aleppo. Sunni Moslem. Lawyer. Active during troubles of February 1936. Resigned from Nationalist *bloc* March 1939 and has since been in opposition to the *bloc*. Considered suitable in 1941 as British propagandist, but refused pay. Suggested for position in Syrian Cabinet in March 1942, but his candidature was ruled out by the Allies on account of his past xenophobic record. Elected Deputy in July 1943 and in 1947, and worked with Rushdi Kekhia (*q.v.*) as reasonable critic of Government; refused Cabinet rank. Minister Plenipotentiary to United States January 1945 to August 1946. Member of Syrian Delegation to U.N.O. Conference at San Francisco April 1945. Member of Syrian Delegation to U.N.O. Conference at London November 1945. Prominent member of Popular Party. Appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs in Hashim Atassi's Government of August 1949. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Formed a Cabinet in December 1949, after General Adib Shishakli's military *coup*, but resigned after less than twenty-four hours as he would not submit to army pressure. Subsequently elected by the Assembly as chairman of the committee which was formed to draft the new Constitution. At the beginning of June 1950 formed a Cabinet in succession to that of Khalid al Azm, with army support. As a result of differences with the military clique led by General Adib Shishakli, which he attributed mainly to French intrigues, Nazim Qudsi resigned on 9th March, 1951. After the fall of Zaim in 1949 Qudsi strongly advocated union with Iraq but he later became more cautious and in December 1950 submitted to the Arab League a much broader plan for the unity of Arab States. Imprisoned by General Shishakli after the *coup d'Etat* of 29th November. Released February 1952. After the fall of General Shishakli, with whom he had refused to co-operate, he resumed his position as President of the Chamber. Returned for Aleppo in 1954 elections and was elected President of the new Chamber.

A serious-minded, upright and sincere little man who, however, nurses deep-rooted suspicions of French and American designs on the Middle East as a whole and Syria in particular. By contrast he is well disposed towards Britain, whom he trusts considerably more than the other Big Powers. Is fearful of further army interference in politics. Speaks fluent English.

#### 81. Quwatli, Shukri

Born about 1886 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Supporter of Faisal. During the rebellion of 1925 afforded every assistance to the rebels. He fled to Palestine, but returned to Syria in 1931. Vice-president of the Nationalist *bloc* at its inception. Made Finance Minister and Defence Minister (combined) in Jamil Mardam's Cabinet on 21st December, 1936. As head of his own party (*Istiklal*), but allied with the Nationalists, was bitterly opposed to Council of Directors, but until French armistice (June 1940) did not take overt political action. He was in close contact with the Italian Disarmament Commission



during the whole of their stay here and was a constant caller on the Italian Consulate in Damascus. Met Roser, the German Agent, several times during the latter's stay in Syria. On arrival of Allies was openly opposed to them and judged it best to go on "pilgrimage" to Mecca (October 1941). Went to Bagdad, where he was entrusted by Ibn Saud with various negotiations between Saudi Arabia and Iraq. Returned to Damascus (September 1942). Entered elections of 1943 as Nationalist leader. Elected Deputy and President of the Republic by overwhelming majority. Fell seriously ill (April 1944); his life was saved by British military doctors with transfusions of British blood. Visited Bagdad in March 1945, where he was not warmly received. Attended meeting of Arab rulers at Inshass in May 1946. Re-elected President for a second term in April 1948. After that his popularity declined rapidly and he was incapable of appreciating the progressive economic policy initiated by Khaled el Azm later that year. He was arrested by Husni Zaim on 30th March, 1949, and resigned on 6th April. Then lived in Switzerland and Egypt for five years. He was urged by many Right-wing politicians to return to Syria immediately after the fall of General Shishakli. This idea was unwelcome to many Populist and Left-wing politicians and so Quwatly became a centre of controversy. Having ambitions to return to the presidency from which it was thought Hashim Atassi would soon retire he judged it prudent to defer his return to Syria until August 7, 1954, which would have been shortly before the elections had they not been postponed. He was triumphantly received but steadily lost ground as a result of his failure to heal personal and party divisions. Was disappointed at the results of the 1954 elections which favoured his rival Khalid al Azm.

A determined exponent of pan-Arabism. Is somewhat slow and ponderous. Has not got a quick or brilliant brain but has a good deal of wisdom. Mentally and physically he might not unfairly be likened to an elephant. Made quite a good representative head of State, but was a bad judge of men and fell into disrepute as a result of the notorious characters of some of his cronies. Was regarded in the early days of the war as pro-Axis and undoubtedly had contacts with Axis representatives in the Levant, but this can probably be attributed to entire singleness of purpose in the Arab cause. It was at one time rumoured, but there is no proof, that he had used his official position to advance his own financial interests. In 1945 and 1946 he co-operated well with the British authorities and he almost certainly has a sense of profound gratitude towards the British both politically and personally. This is not to say that he might not take a line opposed to British policy if he thought Arab interests lay that way. Still hopes to be elected to the Presidency of the Republic on the retirement of Hashim Atassi.

#### 82. Rayyis, Munir

Born Hama in 1899. Sunni. Strong Nationalist. Joined Palestine rebels in 1936 and became second in command to Fauzi Qawekji. Appointed head of the Secret Police (i.e., political) by the Nationalist Government in 1938 and in that capacity aided Palestine rebels. Dismissed a few months later on charges of brutality. Condemned to twenty years' prison and twenty years' banishment for plotting against life of Bahij al Khatib (head of Council of Directors) in 1939, but released in 1940 at intervention of Italian Armistice Commission. Flew in June 1941 on Allied approach and broadcast for Germans from Athens; returned to Syria at the end of 1945. Was successively proprietor of *Al Liwa*, *Az-Zam* (part) and now of *Barada*. *Barada* attacked us bitterly throughout Shishakli's régime, became more moderate after his fall and at the time of the 1954

elections began a fierce attack on the Communists and published our material.

A dangerous agitator and intriguer, associated with the Arab Club, League of National Action. Spearheaded the attacks in the Damascus press on Syro-Iraqi union after the fall of Zaim, whom he had fulsomely supported. Given his character, it is certain that the Saudi and Egyptian opponents of union made it worth his while. A thoroughly contemptible, venal and unscrupulous scoundrel. Anglophobe.

#### 83. Rifa'i Zafer, Dr.

Born about 1907. Sunni Moslem. An Aleppine, of good family, but with no land of his own. Married into the influential Aleppo family of Jabiri in 1941. Doctor of law (Nantes, France—1934). 1938-41: held posts as district officer in Kamichle, Jisr Shaghour and Nebk. Participated in Rashid Ali Kilani's abortive attempt to seize power in Iraq in 1941. Escaped to Turkey, thence to Germany. Assisted in the foundation of the Arab National Party. Supported the National bloc in 1934. Appointed Minister for Foreign Affairs on 9th June, 1952. Represented Syria at the Coronation. Resigned on formation of new Government in July 1953.

Speaks good French and German. Unimpressive but not unintelligent, and showed himself genuinely anxious to help the diplomats.

#### 84. Rikaby, Akram

Born 1900 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Son of the late General Rida Pasha Rikaby, C.B.E. (Governor of Damascus after the British occupation in 1918).

Educated in Iraq and at Cambridge University where he took a degree in agriculture. Member of the Palestine Administration for some years. In charge of the Arab Kadoori School of Agriculture where he had the reputation of being efficient and hard-working though difficult to deal with as he tried to take too much under his wing. Appointed Director-General of National Economy in 1945 but resigned in 1946. Manager of Rafidain Bank 1949-50. Appointed Director-General of Customs in October 1950. Dismissed in June 1951 and appointed Director-General of the Hejaz Railway. Appointed Secretary-General of Agriculture (while retaining charge of the Hejaz Railway) in 1952. Knows little about agriculture but runs his department with a strong hand. Well disposed to the United Kingdom and America and at the same time a strong nationalist.

#### 85. Sada, Munir, Dr.

Born 1903 in Damascus. Moslem. Educated at the Syrian University where he took a degree in medicine. Later specialised in surgery in France. Founder and owner of a well-known private hospital in Damascus in which his wife, a Finn, handles much of the administration. Politically he has frequently changed horses in an effort to gain Parliament. Originally a member of the old Liberal Party he clung to the People's Party when the two were fused. Before elections, however, he deserted them and joined an Independent list with Saadi Kailani (q.v.). Appointed Director-General of Health in October 1950 and in that capacity visited England under British Council auspices in 1951. Resigned his post in December 1951 rather than take an oath not to participate in politics. Much of the trouble in 1952 over the activities of foreign cultural and information centres in Syria could be traced to the publicity which surrounded the action of Dr. Sadat's son who, during a visit to the United States, was photographed shaking hands in public with an Israeli student.

Does not appear to be a man of outstanding character or principle but nevertheless he does have the knack of getting things done.

#### 86. Safa, Mohammad, Colonel

Born 1912 in Soueida. A Moslem. In July 1948 he commanded the Army Liberation Brigade. In September 1948 he commanded an infantry battalion and in January 1949 a Brigade. He was dismissed from the army for his activities against the Zaim régime, and was imprisoned in August 1949. He was afterwards reinstated in the army and appointed military attaché in Paris. In 1951 he became military attaché in Washington. At the end of 1952 he was placed on pension having ostensibly reached the retiring age; in fact he was dismissed for his activities against the Shishakli régime. Organised from Iraq a Free Syria Movement which caused General Shishakli some anxiety and led to a deterioration of Syrian-Iraqi relations. Was stated to have assisted the revolt in the Jebel Druze in January 1954. After Shishakli's fall did not at first return to Syria and when he did in July 1954 was immediately arrested. He has since remained in prison without trial.

A report on this officer written in October 1950 stated that he was intelligent and able, dangerous fanatical, feared within the army and the potential centre of a *coup d'Etat*.

#### 87. Sahnaoui, Jean

Born about 1905 in Damascus. Greek Catholic of humble extraction, one of seven brothers, all of whom are now wealthy. Appointed honorary Spanish Vice-Consul in 1936. In April to September 1941 was Minister of Finance in Khalid al Azm's Government. During winter of 1941-42 was engaged in large contracts for British army and made a great deal of money. Represented Syrian Chamber of Commerce at the Commercial Conference held in Chicago in 1945. Has toured the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States. His visit to the United Kingdom was strongly backed by the Department of Overseas Trade. Managing director of big sugar and glass companies and interested in the formation of a National Bank. Although not a politician accepted post as Minister of National Economy in Khalid al Azm's Cabinet of December 1948 to March 1949 and showed himself a progressive and thoughtful Minister anxious to promote commercial relations between Syria and the outside world.

Is an extremely unsatisfactory business man to deal with, putting off any decision to the last possible moment; amiable personality, close personal friend of Khalid al Azm and open to social flattery. Now lives in Beirut and shows little sign of resuming politics in Syria.

#### 88. Sawwaf, Husni

Born 1900 in Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Studied at the American University of Beirut and afterwards taught there until 1947 as Professor of Economics. Counsellor at the Syrian Legation in Washington 1947-49 during which time he took his Ph.D. at George Washington University. Appointed Secretary-General of the Ministry of National Economy in April 1949.

Acting Minister of National Economy after General Shishakli's *coup d'Etat* of 29th November, 1951, reverting to Secretary-General on formation of Government on 9th June, 1952.

One of the very few Syrian administrative officials who can be counted on to give a balanced view on some of the many economic problems affecting Syria. He has a quiet, agreeable manner.

#### 89. Sayigh, Maximos IV

Born in 1878 in Aleppo. Archbishop of Tyre in 1919 and of Beirut in 1922. Elected Patriarch of the Greek Catholic Church in the East in succession to Moghabghab in October 1947 by the Synod of the Greek Catholic Church meeting at

'Ain Traz in the Lebanon. He is well liked by the Greek Catholic community and has decided to live in Damascus though he may spend a part of his time in Cairo and Alexandria, where he has palaces. Has on several occasions delivered anti-Communist sermons and likes political intrigue.

#### 90. Sha'alan, Fawwaz Amir

Born about 1907. Sunni Moslem. Grandson of Nuri, whom he succeeded on latter's death in 1942. Even before he became chief, had a strong following in the Ruwalla. Treacherously slew his rival and cousin, Farhan bin Mashur, near Palmyra in April 1935. Has married both his sisters into Ibn Saud's family, one to Ibn Saud himself and the other to the Amir Saud. These matches are looked upon by the Bedouin as having a political significance in connexion with the Wadi Sirhan grazing lands and the Jauf Oasis. Was Deputy 1936-39 under the Nationalist banner.

During the British blockade of Vichy Syria (1941) conducted a remunerative contraband trade between Transjordan and Syria. During Syrian campaign he and the Ruwalla remained strictly neutral, although the Vichy French gave them a number of arms, which they largely surrendered on the Allied arrival in Damascus. In 1942 he was given profitable contracts by the British army. Elected Deputy for Bedouins of Damascus area 1943, and again in 1947; visited America at the time of the United Nations Conference in San Francisco, April 1945, and spent a month in England on his way back.

Played an important part in Ibn Saud's covert campaign against Syro-Iraqi union after Colonel Sami Hinnawi's *coup d'Etat* of August 1949. Vanished from Syria shortly before the unsuccessful attempt by a group of terrorists called the Arab Redemption Society, whom he was probably financing on behalf of King Ibn Saud, against the life of General Shishakli in October 1950. Sometimes in Damascus, but spends much of his time in Beirut or abroad.

Like all Bedouin, a shameless money-seeker. A drunkard and frequenter of cabarets. Is rarely with his tribe and is losing influence with them, but his sons are taking his place. His close connexions with the late King Ibn Saud result in his being the only big tribal leader who is definitely opposed to Greater Syria.

#### 91. Shatra, Mahmud, Lieutenant-Colonel

A Circassian Moslem, born near Aleppo in 1913. Became head of the Deuxième Bureau in 1950 and Commander of the Bedouin Control Force in 1951. He has had twenty years' service.

He is intelligent, crafty, reputedly anti-British and was believed to be close to General Shishakli until arrested at the end of 1952 on a charge of implication in a plot against the régime. July 1953 released from prison. April 1954 recalled to army and appointed military attaché at Paris. May 1954 transferred to Washington.

#### 92. Shayib, Fwad

Born in Maalula 1911. Greek Orthodox. Tolerant and widely respected by Muslims. Damascus law degree in 1931, after that studied political science and law in France. Wrote for the press from 1930 to 1940. In 1941 taught Arab literature in an Iraqi Secondary School. In 1942 Head of the Press Bureau in Syria and in 1952 Head of the Press and Propaganda Bureau which post he holds to-day together with that of Acting Director of the Syrian Broadcasting Station. Was also Information Officer to President Shishakli. Survived the change when his attitude was considered by all to have been correct.



He is a good civil servant not concerned with changes of government and therefore said by some to be rather a "Vicar of Bray." Speaks French and English. Intelligent, devoted to his work, one of the best writers of Arabic in Syria.

### 93. Shishakli, Adib, Brigadier-General

Born 1901 in Hama. Moslem. Took part in the Hama revolt against the French in 1925 and in 1945 deserted the French forces and joined the Syrian army. Battalion Commander in 1948 and in September of that year appointed second-in-command of a brigade. Took part in Husni Zaim's *coup d'Etat* of 30th March, 1949. Appointed Director-General of Police and Security soon after, and promoted to rank of lieutenant-colonel a few days later. Leader of the Parti Populaire Syrien in the army, Shishakli fell foul of Husni Zaim when the latter made him hand over Antoun Saade, head of the P.P.S., to the Lebanese authorities in July 1949, after asylum had been granted to Saade in Syria. As a result of their quarrel he was first relegated to the appointment of Commandant de la Place, Aleppo, then offered the post of Military Attaché, Jeddah, which he refused, and finally dismissed by Zaim at the end of July. Reinstated by the late Colonel Hinnawi after the latter's successful *coup* against Husni Zaim and appointed commander of the 1st Brigade. On 19th December, 1949, Shishakli took matters into his own hands and in collaboration with Akram Hourani (*q.v.*) organised a successful *coup* (he called it "disciplinary action") against Hinnawi. Shishakli, an avowed Republican, accused Hinnawi of plotting to bring about union with Iraq. Became Deputy Chief of the General Staff on the day of his *coup*. Managed to maintain a firm control on the political situation in Syria. Became Chief of Staff in April 1951. Following a duel for power between the army and the politicians led by the People's Party, Shishakli staged a *coup d'Etat* on 29th November, 1951, imprisoning the newly-formed Government of Ma'arif Dawalibi (*q.v.*) and leading People's Party politicians and installing Brigadier-General Fawzi Silo (*q.v.*) as Head of State and Prime Minister; the Secretaries-General of Ministries became acting Ministers. Shishakli remained Chief of Staff. During the early part of 1952 he paid official visits to the Lebanon, Jordan and Saudi Arabia. He had great difficulty in getting political support for the military régime but managed to form a Government of "new men" on 9th June, 1952; later became Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of the Interior. He promoted himself to brigadier-general on the 1st of April, 1953, and, as a result of a referendum, was elected President on July 10. There was no other candidate. Because of his typically Syrian suspicion and unwillingness to delegate authority yet probably contrary to his intention, his régime became more and more dictatorial. He insisted that almost every problem however petty should be referred to him for decision, and on these terms naturally he could get no collaboration from the leading politicians of the old régime. Suspecting plots against the régime he dismissed or imprisoned a very large number of the most influential people in Syria. To suppress disaffection in the Jebel Druze, which he suspected Iraq and Britain of fomenting, he employed artillery and the régime became more repressive. When an army revolt with Left-wing backing broke out in Aleppo in February 1954 he found the allegiance of many of his commanders doubtful. Within twenty-four hours he resigned and fled to the Lebanon declaring that he would not be responsible for a civil war. After a period in Saudi Arabia, he went to France, where he was alleged to be dealing in munitions.

He is married and has eight children. Although outwardly pleasant and amicable he is shrewd, very cunning and ruthless. Towards the end he took to

drinking heavily to calm his nerves that were on edge with fears of assassination. His resignation was probably the result of weariness and disgust. He had genuinely according to his lights tried to bring reforms to Syria and his Government was the most efficient the country had known since independence, but his effort at a national revival met with apathy from the masses and opposition from the politically-minded whose collaboration he failed to enlist.

### 94. Shlash, Emir, Brigadier

Born 1910 in Deir-az-Zor. A Moslem. In 1949 he commanded an Infantry Battalion. In 1950 he was Commandant of the Homs Military Academy. In 1951 he commanded a Brigade. He was made Assistant Chief of Staff in November 1951. December 1953 promoted to brigadier. March 1954 appointed Garrison Commander at Qatam.

He is a pleasant well-mannered officer with no force of character. Popular with his brother officers. Was made Deputy Chief of Staff by Shishakli because he was willing to take second place. When Shishakli fled he fell into disrepute though he was not dismissed. Is now without influence in the army.

A weak but pleasant personality. Speaks fluent French.

### 95. Showra, Munir

Born 1910, Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Son of a Damascus chemist. Has the degree of Doctor of Medicine of Damascus University. Also studied surgery in Paris. A professor in the Damascus School of Medicine since 1942. Was a prominent supporter of the military régime and head of the Damascus branch of the Arab Liberation Movement. Withdrew from politics after the fall of Shishakli, but would like to make a comeback. Has an agreeable wife who speaks English and French.

### 96. Shukair, Fuad Shawkat, Brigadier-General

A Druze, born in Lebanon in 1910. In 1950 he became Head of the Fourth Bureau and Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Staff. In 1952 made lieutenant-colonel and Officer Commanding, 4th Liwa. Appointed Chief of Staff by General Shishakli in July 1953. He was a close confidant of General Shishakli and, when the latter fell, made an effort to perpetuate the military régime by supporting Ma'amoun Kuzbari (*q.v.*) as the legal successor to the Presidency. As he was losing control of the army, he made a virtue of necessity and sided with the anti-Shishakli group of officers. Subsequently played a leading part in the negotiations at Homs between the army and political leaders which led to the return to the 1950 Constitution and the reinstatement of Hashim Atassi as President of the Republic. Retained his position through suppleness and the lack of an obvious successor.

His political sympathies are with the Left wing and under him the army will never be free of political intrigue.

Drives a hard bargain and is a great haggler. He is a close confidant of General Shishakli. He is strongly pro-French and speaks fluent French but no English.

### 97. Shuqairi, Ahmed

Born in 1906 in Acre. Moslem. He is married, with two children. His father was the Grand Mufti of Palestine before Haj Amin Hussein, with whom he is not on good terms. He is a graduate both of the American University in Beirut and of London University. He is a lawyer and practised for some time before becoming interested in politics. He

speaks English, Turkish and French. Now Assistant Secretary-General of the Arab League and has the reputation of being a voluble and ranting orator. Uncompromising on any Arab Nationalist theme, especially the Palestine question. A member of the Syrian delegation to the 1952 and 1953 sessions of the United Nations and acting head of the delegation in 1954. Shuqairi is pushing and ambitious, qualities which tend to influence his political views and which have brought him into sharp personal conflict with Hassouna, the Secretary-General of the Arab League and Farid Zainuddin, Syrian Ambassador at Washington.

### 98. Sibai, Mustafa Shaikh

Born in Homs about 1915. Moslem. Studied at Al-Azhar University, Cairo, where he was when Rashid Ali's rebellion took place in 1941. He was accused of having distributed a circular in Cairo calling on the Egyptian people to support the movement, was arrested by the Egyptian police and detained for some two months without trial; deported from Egypt and interned by the British authorities in Palestine at Sarafand for seven months. Repatriated to Syria, where he was again interned for two years, first at Mich-Mieh and then at Rashaya; released early 1945, when he began to take a strong interest in the Moslem Brethren. Since 1946 he has been director of the Arab Institute in Damascus (a school run by the Moslem Brethren). He is controller-general of the Moslem Brethren in both Syria and the Lebanon, and was one of the principal editors of *El Manar* newspaper, the mouthpiece of the Moslem Brethren until its suppression in April 1949. *El Manar* reappeared in November 1949. Elected to the Constituent Assembly in November 1949 as chief representative of the newly-formed Islamic Socialist Front (= Moslem Brethren) of which he is the main spokesman. In 1950 together with Muhammad Mubarak publicly advocated a rapprochement with the Soviet Union.

Imprisoned by General Shishakli early in 1952 when he and Muhammad Mubarak showed signs of preparing to call out the mobs ostensibly in support of Egypt but really to upset or embarrass the régime. Re-elected in 1954 as Head of the Moslem Brotherhood in Syria after a split in the Brotherhood ranks had been healed during the visit to Syria in the summer of 1954 of Hudeibi, the Supreme Guide of the Brotherhood in Egypt. Did not stand in the 1954 elections for Parliament in which the Brotherhood was ostensibly neutral. Was prominent towards the end of 1954 as a consequence of the many demonstrations in Syria protesting against the attack by the Egyptian Government on the Brotherhood in Egypt. He is accused of being more interested in politics than in religion.

### 99. Sidawi, Wadi'

Born Damascus 1907. Greek Orthodox. Took law degree, Damascus 1925. Worked as assistant for seventeen years to Yusuf el Isa on the paper *Alef Ba*, and in 1942 bought *Al Kifah* from Amin Said, but abandoned it in early 1943 to its original proprietor; editor of *El Nasr*. Speaks English and French. Was pro-Allied during the second world war but has since developed a greed for money which results in his newspaper vilifying anyone or any Government for a sufficient payment. In the first half of 1948 *El Nasr* was particularly anti-British over Palestine, and closely followed the Communist line. The advent of Husni Zaim brought an era of unprecedented prosperity for Sidawi. *El Nasr* became one of the unofficial mouthpieces of the dictator and it is more than likely that Sidawi's present financial independence is the outcome of his wholehearted support of Zaim. He has undoubtedly some ability as a journalist and his paper has the

highest sales in Damascus. His opportunism has become even more apparent latterly. His paper has often taken a fellow-traveller line. It has been alleged that he receives money from the Soviet Legation and the Banque de Syrie. Employs one or two well-known fellow-travellers as sub-editors. In 1954 was guest of West German Government and was suitably laudatory on his return, but later reverted to a fellow-travelling line. He has also visited East Germany. Closely associated with Khalid al Azm in 1954 elections.

### 100. Stati, Georgis

Born about 1884. Of Homs. Syrian Catholic Bishop of Damascus (1933). Not a fanatical Christian, *i.e.*, he can bear sight of Christians not members of his church. Is an ardent defender of the "minorities" cause. Generally esteemed. Pro-British during the Vichy régime. A good scholar of Syriac.

### 101. Surur, Hayyil Shaikh

Born in 1913. Educated by private teachers in Beduin encampment. In 1947 he inherited from his father, Auda Surur, the leadership of the Musaid tribe which is the largest Beduin group in the Jebel Druze district. He was exiled by the French in 1936 but returned in time to be elected as a Deputy in the Syrian Parliament of 1937. The French would not allow him, however, to take his seat on the grounds that he was too young. In 1939 he migrated with his tribe to Transjordan to avoid further trouble with the Mandatory Power. Failed in the Syrian elections of 1943 but succeeded in 1947. In 1948 he led his tribesmen into Palestine and succeeded in holding Lydda and Ramleh for several weeks until regular forces from Transjordan took over. Although serving under the Jordanian Command he was the only Beduin leader to take an active part in the fighting in Palestine. The Syrian Government whose regular troops had not succeeded so well as Hayyil's Beduin, arrested him on his return to Damascus. He then joined the Popular Party in opposition to Shukri Quwatly and the Nationalists. He attempted to lead all Beduin Deputies into the opposition but failed.

He was arrested by Zaim in April 1949 and remained in prison for several weeks.

Elected to Constituent Assembly in November 1949. Held in custody for over a month in 1953 ostensibly on a charge of being mixed up in smuggling, but in fact on suspicion of political activity against the régime. Successful in 1954 elections following which he appeared to have considerable influence with the *bloc* of tribal Deputies.

He is shrewd, witty and possesses much common sense. He is openly pro-British. His personal conduct is strictly regulated by Beduin ethics.

### 102. Suweiti, Malatius

Born about 1907 in Damascus. Educated at the Greek Orthodox Community School in Damascus. Entered the Church at an early age, and on completion of his higher education was sent to Alexandria as a deacon where he remained for ten years, with the exception of four years spent in theological and language studies at Athens.

From Egypt he moved to the United States, and during his stay of three years visited many States. The United States being a part of the See of Antioch, the three years he spent there made him eligible for election to the Bishopric. He was elected during his absence there and was elevated immediately upon his return. Is now Deputy Patriarch, but is not on very good terms with the Patriarch whose fellow-travelling proclivities he openly deplores.

Speaks English and French well.



A friendly, tolerant man. Popular with the younger members of the community on account of his broadmindedness and progressive outlook on social affairs.

#### 103. Tahsin, Said

Born 1904. Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Privately educated. At one time employed as a teacher in Bagdad in elementary schools.

President of "Arab Society of Fine Art." Father-in-law of Walid Majed, "chef du Protocole" at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Known to be an ardent fellow-traveller and prominent member of local "Peace" Committee. Attended the Warsaw Conference and has recently been active in producing anti-Western cartoons for Communist-sponsored local newspapers and magazines. Was Chairman of the Congress of Peace Partisans which met at Damascus in 1954.

#### 104. Tallas, Assad

Born in Aleppo about 1905. Sunni Moslem. Educated at Fuad I University, Cairo, and later studied in France. Took up teaching and then obtained a post in the Syrian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and became head of the Administrative Section. Was at one time Director of Consular Affairs and served in diplomatic posts abroad including Tehran and Athens, where he was chargé d'affaires. While at Athens he was appointed Syrian member of the United Nations Commission in Greece. On his return to Syria he was given a post in the Legal Department of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

Tallas accompanied Adel Arslan to Bagdad on an official mission during Zaim's régime and while there secretly discussed with the Iraqis the possibility of overthrowing Zaim and bringing about closer relations between Syria and Iraq. On his return to Damascus he began to work upon the late Colonel Hinnawi, to whom he was related by marriage and on whom he exerted a powerful influence. Zaim offended Tallas by transferring him to a minor post in the Ministry of Education in July and this set Tallas firmly and finally against him. Following Hinnawi's successful *coup d'Etat* against Zaim, Tallas became Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and exploited his position to promote Syro-Iraqi union, using the rather stupid Hinnawi as a tool for this purpose. His career was abruptly interrupted on 19th December by the anti-Hinnawi *coup* carried out by General Adib Shishakli and Tallas, after taking refuge in the Iraqi Legation, fled to Bagdad via Beirut. He continues to remain a refugee in Bagdad.

#### 105. Tayyara, Sami

Born in Homs in about 1906. Sunni Moslem. Comes of a humble family. Took a degree in medicine in France. Minister of Health and Acting Minister of Public Works in the Cabinet formed by Khalid al Azm on 27th March, 1951. Appointed Minister of Education in Government formed on 9th June, 1952. Resigned on formation of new Government in July 1953. Seems well disposed towards United Kingdom, which he visited as a British Council visitor at the end of 1952. Did not stand in 1954 elections.

#### 106. Tillawi, Said

Born in Homs, 1912. Sunni Moslem. A distant relative by marriage of ex-President Quwatli by whom he was appointed as a secretary at the Presidency in 1943. Removed from this post in 1945 by Muhsin Barazi, then Secretary-General of the Presidency, for exploiting his position. Took to journalism as a partner in a newspaper subsidised by Quwatli and later took over another pro-Quwatli paper *El Faiha*. Imprisoned by Husni Zaim after

the first *coup d'Etat* but co-operated with the régime after his release. When the People's Party came to power Tillawi was in trouble again and was imprisoned for offences against the Press Law. His paper was regarded as the unofficial mouthpiece of General Shishakli's régime and as such received financial and moral support. Tillawi attacks Britain regularly and unscrupulously; when short of material he turns his attentions to the United States and France. He also attacks Iraq and the friendship of the Hashemites with Britain. He employs a fellow-traveller as editor. His paper is a disgrace even by Arab standards, but can write well in a forceful style.

Tillawi is loud and uncouth, drinks to excess and his morals cause raised eyebrows even amongst his colleagues.

#### 107. Trabulsi, Izzat

Born 1913. Damascus. Sunni Moslem. Graduate of Lycée Franco-Arabe, and of School of Law of Syrian University. Obtained a doctorate of law and a certificate in political science at Paris. Practised law, 1934 to 1938. In 1938 appointed to Ministry of Finance. 1946-1947: lecturer on finance at School of Law, Damascus. 1948: Government representative at Exchange Control Office. Then became Secretary-General at the Ministry of Finance until he resigned at the end of 1954 to become manager in Damascus of the Aley Bank.

Author of two books, one on agricultural development in Syria (in French), the other on finance.

No political affiliations. Was an able and influential civil servant.

#### 108. Zainuddin, Farid

Born about 1905. A Druse of Lebanese origin. Studied at American University, Beirut, specialising in economics, and later continued his studies in England and France (Doctor of Law, Paris, 1932). Acquired Syrian nationality and joined the Nationalist *bloc*. In July 1938 appointed Assistant Under-Secretary of State in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. After fall of Nationalist Government, went to Beirut. Was a prominent member of the Arab Club in Damascus, the centre of pro-Nazi intrigue. In 1940-41 is believed to have been go-between for the Italian Armistice Commission and Shukri Quwatli. Arrested by Allies and interned until 1943. Director-General of Supply, January to November 1944. Syrian representative on General Supply Council, March 1944. Expert to Syrian delegation to U.N.O. Conference at San Francisco, April 1945. Syrian representative on Preliminary Committee and member of delegation to U.N.O. Conference in London, November 1945. Is believed to have lined his pockets while in Ministry of Supply. Appointed Minister to Moscow in 1947. Member of Syrian delegation to U.N.O. April and September 1947, and again in 1950. Appointed Head of the Permanent Syrian Delegation to the United Nations in June 1951 in place of Faris al Khouri (*q.v.*). When the permanent delegation was temporarily abolished at the end of 1951, he was appointed Syrian Minister in Washington, but was later reappointed head of the reconstituted delegation. Appointed Minister (later Ambassador) in Washington on 20th October, 1952, being accredited also to Mexico in November. Quarrelled in 1953 with Ahmed Shuqairi who became Acting Head of the Syrian delegation in 1954.

Is xenophobe in general and in the past was pronouncedly Anglophobe; his attitude towards the British now is not clear, but he has not ceased to resent his internment in Mich-Mieh. Suspected in 1954 of Left-wing tendencies and of softness towards the Soviet *bloc*. He and his wife speak excellent English and French.

## APPENDIX

### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES

VY 1902/1

No. 14

#### SYRIA : HEADS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

*Sir John Gardener to Mr. Macmillan. (Received November 21, 1955)*

(No.127. Confidential) *Damascus,*  
Sir, *November 12, 1955.*

With reference to my despatch No. 130 of the 13th of September, 1954, I have the honour to transmit herewith the Annual Report on Heads of Foreign Missions accredited to Syria.

I have, &c.  
J. GARDENER.

Enclosure

(Passages marked with an asterisk are reproduced from previous reports. The symbol ‡ means formerly Minister.)

#### Argentina

M. Arturo Martinez Pardo, Counsellor, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*. (November 23, 1954.)

A pleasant colleague whose work lies mainly in maintaining the Latin American-Arab *bloc* in the United Nations.

#### Brazil

M. Mario Santos, Minister. (July 3, 1952.)  
\*Served previously in Australia. Though seldom seen, he is well known as an eccentric. Spends his time buying oriental objects which will, he declares, make his fortune on resale (free of customs) in Brazil. (Written in 1954.)

#### Bulgaria

Dr. Sava Popavramov, Chargé d'Affaires. (June 1, 1955.)  
Is rarely, if ever, seen in public.

#### Chile

Dr. Santiago Awad, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*. (July 15, 1955.)  
Of Syrian origin but born and trained as a medical man in Chile. A political appointee. Pleasant with a very amiable wife.

#### Egypt

M. Mahmoud Riad, Ambassador. (March 26, 1955.)

Until his appointment here (and possibly still) a regular army officer. His last appointment was head of the Arab Affairs section of the Egyptian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and has served on the Egyptian Delegation to United Nations from time to time.

A fervent supporter of the present military régime in Egypt. Able and hard working. Both he and his wife speak English and are pleasant to meet. It is quite possible that basically he is not anti-British.

#### France

M. Claude Achille Clarac, Ambassador. (April 7, 1955.)

Owing to my absence on leave I have had insufficient opportunity of forming a definite opinion on M. Clarac whose appointment here promised better days for Anglo-French co-operation in Syria. I am inclined to think that, while personally friendly and co-operative, his instructions to safeguard France's "special position" here prevent the development of real co-operation. With or without his agreement a new Counsellor, the Baron d'Halloy (ex-Oslo) has been posted here where he has given a definitely anti-British impression.

#### German Federal Republic

M. Hans Joachim von der Esch, Minister. (October 14, 1952.)

\*He was well known in Egypt for some years before the war and I understand that while ostensibly representing a German engineering firm and allegedly having a penchant for desert exploration, he was in fact preparing the way for the German Long-Range Desert Group. I find him intelligent and agreeable. His Swedish wife is particularly charming. (Written in 1953.)

#### Holy See

Monsignor Paolo Pappalardo. (May 21, 1953.)  
\*The first Papal representative accredited here. Was previously in a similar post for some eight years in Tehran. I have only just met him. (Written in 1953.)  
\*Is still little seen and that little is not impressive. (Written in 1954.)  
Has been in Italy on sick leave for long periods.

#### Hungary

M. Karoly Bonyhadi, Chargé d'Affaires. (May 13, 1954.)  
\*Has previously served in Ankara. Seems pleasant and has some sense of humour. Speaks French. (Written in 1954.)

#### Iran

M. Hussain Diba, Minister. (Agrément accordé.)  
Has just arrived here from Jeddah so I have therefore not yet met him.

#### Iraq

M. Abdul-Jalil Al-Rawi, Minister. (August 2, 1954.)

\*A professional diplomatist who has served at several posts in Arab countries and as Minister-Counsellor in Washington. He and his wife speak good English and, though staunch Nationalists, seem to be well disposed towards us. (Written in 1954.)  
Our co-operation has developed very satisfactorily. As an Arab, he has had access to sources of information and has been able to take action in a manner impossible for a non-Arab. In this way his co-operation has been invaluable.



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#### Italy

M. Vitale Guido di Miceli, First Secretary, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*. (November 1, 1955.)  
Belongs to the chancelleries branch of the Italian Foreign Service. A trained Arabist with whom I have previously served in Morocco. A good fellow, but not here politically active.

#### Saudi Arabia

Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ibn Zaid, Ambassador. † (August 14, 1952.)

\*Doyen of the Corps. Although he nominally lives in Damascus, he spends most of the winter in Beirut. Speaks no European language. A frail, sick man who looks, and behaves, like a living corpse. (Written in 1951.)

Recent events have somewhat forced him into the limelight and he appears to have been actively pursuing his country's interests which are—unfortunately—opposed to our own. As the representative of the centre of Islam and of a money-dispensing nation, he is now a personality here.

Our personal relations, which date back to 1943, remain good.

#### Soviet Union

M. Serguei S. Nemtchina, Minister. (October 29, 1953.)

\*Born in Leningrad in 1906. Served in Paris before becoming Soviet Minister in Bangkok in 1947. Left there in 1950 and was a member of various Soviet delegations to international conferences subsequent to his appointment to Damascus.

An affable colleague who attends social events but does not entertain himself. He seems high-powered for his present appointment and his arrival here may indicate a growing Soviet interest in Syrian affairs. He and his wife speak French with a strong accent. (Written in 1954.)

#### Spain

M. Don Ramon Saenz de Heredia y Manzanos, Minister. (October 27, 1954.)

A very pleasant friendly person with a very agreeable wife whose last post was London. Contacts are limited because Spanish interests here are small though he does his best to promote the well-aided theory that Spain has a special standing with the Arab world.

#### Turkey

M. Adnan Kural, Minister. (March 26, 1955.)

A very able charming person who since his arrival has co-operated fully with this embassy. Speaks excellent French and good English.

#### United States

Mr. James S. Moose, Jr., Ambassador. (September 30, 1952.)

\*He has served in a wide variety of Middle Eastern posts and was previously here as Counsellor. I have always found him most sensible and co-operative. His wife is an agreeable lady. (Written in 1953.)

A most loyal co-operative colleague with great knowledge of Syria and the Middle East generally and whose judgment is sound.

#### Yugoslavia

Dr. Slavko Zore, Minister. (May 12, 1955.)  
Talkative but unimpressive.

#### Resident in Beirut

(Those marked with a dagger have secretaries or attachés resident in Damascus.)

#### Austria

M. Kurt Farbowsky, Chargé d'Affaires. (May 14, 1955.)

#### Belgium

†M. Fernand Seynaeve, Minister. (October 2, 1952.)

#### Czechoslovakia

†M. Cenek Herold, Minister. (July 1, 1954.)

#### Greece

M. Georges St. Seferiades, Minister. (March 5, 1953.)

#### Jordan

†M. Jamal Touqan, Minister. (November 16, 1954.)

#### Mexico

M. Marco A. Almazan, Third Secretary, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*. (October 17, 1950.)

#### Switzerland

M. Franz Kappeler, Minister. (January 8, 1951.)

#### Resident in Cairo

#### Denmark

M. Georg Lyngbye Host, Minister. (December 10, 1953.)

#### Ethiopia

M. Ato Marcos Hanna, First Secretary, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*. (August 1, 1953.)

#### Indonesia

Dr. Tamzil Sutan Narayau, Minister. (October 24, 1955.)

#### Japan

†M. Shigeru Yosano, Minister. (July 22, 1954.)

#### Netherlands

†M. W. Cnoop Koopmans, Minister. (January 24, 1952.)

#### Norway

M. Christian Prah Reusch, Minister. (October 13, 1954.)

#### Poland

M. Wlodzimierz Paszkowski, 1st Secretary, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*. (December 13, 1951.)

#### Sweden

M. Jean-Jacques de Dardel, Chargé d'Affaires *ad interim*. (June 1955.)

#### Resident in Baghdad

#### Afghanistan

M. Sardar Faiz Muhammad Zekria, Minister. (*Agrément accordé.*)

#### Resident in Ankara

#### Finland

M. Bruno Kivikoski, Minister. (September 8, 1954.)

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